Occult Lineages
within the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement

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Introduction

If there's one phrase Traditional Roman Catholics fear the most, that phrase is "occasion for scandal."

In fact, some Traditionalist groups fear occasion for scandal so much, that one seminary forbids their students from chewing gum when they go out in public. In effect, "occasion for scandal" can mean anything from behavior that can damage the movement, or that shows the priest is just a regular human being like anybody else.

In these pages, I intend to show an occasion for scandal of even larger proportions than that, one which has entered the Traditional Movement unnoticed, which seems never to have been questioned, and which may affect the majority of the "smaller" bishops, priests, and their congregations.

To what do I refer? I refer to the fact that the majority of the smaller groups have apostolic succession from Occultists, namely Gnostics, Martinists, and Rosicrucians who managed to obtain apostolic succession from the Independent Sacramental Movement.

These lineages are likewise possessed by Sedeplenist, Sedevacantist, and Sedeprivationist bishops, thus present within all three "Sede" positions.

I say nothing that is "new" or "original." In fact, all of this is common knowledge in some circles. It is just not common knowledge among most English-speaking Traditionalists or Novus Ordinarians, many of whom nay be encountering this information for the first time.

Lastly but most importantly, I will also show that these lines of succession are valid, and that these bishops are true bishops in spite of what personages may stand in their lines. In fact these Traditional bishops may even be doing a good deed by repatriating these lineages, even if other Traditionalist clergy (and most Trad laity) may view things differently.

One: Defining Our Terms

Before we start discussing the present of Occult lineages within the Traditional Catholic Movement, we should point that our study takes us into territory unfamiliar to most people. Therefore it might help if we define our terms and provide something of a roadmap for the terrain about to be traveled.

This is intended as an "orientation guide" for those not familiar with the terms and subjects of our investigation. Those familiar with these terms and subjects are welcome to skip ahead to the next chapter.

Traditional Roman Catholic

The first stumbling block might be the term "Traditional Roman Catholic," since there are two parties using that term in very different senses. The first are also known as *doctrinal traditionalists*, who believe the Second Vatican Council taught heresy and have no union with the current occupant of the Chair of St. Peter or any of the bishops in union with him. This is the group to whom I refer by the term "Traditional Roman Catholics."

The second party are also known as *liturgical traditionalists*, who are members of the post-Vatican II Church in good standing, but who simply prefer the Traditional Latin Mass as opposed to the Novus Ordo Missae. I shall refer to this party as *Indultarians*, a term used by Traditionalists in reference to the Indult *Ecclesia Dei* of 1988, after which their Masses became known as "*indult Masses*." The intention behind this term is value-neutral, and intended only to mark a clear distinction between two groups claiming the mantle of "Traditional Roman Catholicism."

Novus Ordo Church

A term largely unknown outside Traditionalist circles, the phrase "Novus Ordo Church" refers to the post-Vatican II institution calling itself the "Catholic Church." In fact Traditionalists prefer this term when talking about the modern Vatican II, as their belief that the institution is heretical prevents them from calling it or its hierarchy "Catholic."

The members of the Novus Ordo Church are referred to as *Novus Ordinarians*, and one point of separation between Trads and Novus Ordinarians is how to define the word "Catholic." While a Novus Ordinarian defines catholicity in terms of institutional membership and "Rome" as the physical city (i.e. "being in union with the Pope" is identical to "being in union with Rome"), the Traditional Catholic defines catholicity in terms of doctrinal consistency and "Rome" as a state of teaching and practicing what the Church has consistently taught and practiced, even if the modern Vatican rejects it.

For purposes of this writing, I have no interest in determining which position is the "more correct" one, only to explain that the difference in position exists.

Sedevacantist, Sedeprivationist, Sedeplenist

Another set of terms that needs to be explained is the three "Sede" positions: Sedevacantism, Sedeprivationism, and Sedeplenism. These terms denote how an individual Traditionalist (or Traditional group) perceives the current occupant of the Chair of St. Peter.

A *Sedevacantist* believes that the current occupant of the Chair is a heretic, and since Canon Law forbids a heretic from holding any ecclesiastical office whatsoever, the current occupant is thus seen as a usurper and not a valid Pope. A *Sedeprivationist* believes that because the current occupant physically sits on the Chair, he is *materially* Pope, but is not *formally* Pope unless he acts and decrees like a pre-Vatican II Pope would do. A *Sedeplenist* believes the occupant of the Chair is a valid Pope but they have an obligation to disobey any decree not in alignment with pre-Vatican II papacies (as a side note, the *recognize and resist* camp of Traditionalists tend to be Sedeplenists).

Again, I am not seeking to point out which position is "more correct" not to enter into a technical discussion of each, merely to give the reader a concise (though albeit oversimplified) definition for each term.

Apostolic Succession

As the whole of this writing will focus on the topic of *apostolic succession*, it may be helpful to include a few notes about it here.

The term "apostolic succession" refers to the fact that every validly-consecrated bishop living in the world today, can trace himself back to the bishop who consecrated him, to the bishop who consecrated him, and so on, with this *line* or *lineage* ending with one or other of the Twelve Apostles. We see the roots of this succession in the first chapter of the Book of Acts, in which Matthias is chosen to take Judas Iscariot's place after he committed suicide on Good Friday. We see another example of this in Paul's epistles to Timothy, where he tells Timothy to mind the grace bestowed by the laying on of hands and commit the same to other faithful men.

Apostolic succession is valued in the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the institutional Old Catholic Churches (based on the Continent), the Independent Sacramental Movement (which includes Old Catholics in the Anglosphere), and the Novus Ordo Church. Apostolic succession is also valued within the Anglican Communion, though a debate exists over the "Parker Lineage" from which Anglican succession is derived; the subject of Anglican ordinations is a fairly nuanced one since the Bonn Agreement of 1931 and the acceptance of women's ordination beginning in 1976, and will be outside the scope of this discussion.

Validity and Liceity

When discussing lines of apostolic succession (and the Sacraments in general), the terms *validity* and *liceity* will come up often. In a word, *validity* refers to whether a given occurrence of a sacramental ritual has any spiritual effect, or in simpler terms, if the ritual "worked." If the ritual worked, then the sacrament is *valid*.

Liceity, on the other hand, refers to whether the occurrence of a sacramental ritual happened within the boundaries of an organization's laws. If so, then the act is *licit*, otherwise it is known as *illicit*.

The analogy I often use to explain this is much like driving a car. You can drive a car to the store *validly* regardless of whether you have a driver's license; i.e. you get into the car, turned the key, put the

transmission in gear, hit the gas pedal, and successfully drove to the store. However, you can only *licitly* drive to the store if you have a driver's license.

This distinction exists because the Roman Catholic Church has never claimed a monopoly on spiritual processes, including the spiritual processes of her own sacraments. If a non-Catholic meets the requirements for celebrating the sacraments (form, matter, intent, ordination except in cases of Baptism and Matrimony), then they are capable of administering a valid sacrament just as if they were themselves Catholic. However, the non-Catholic's sacrament would be considered *illicit* because it was not done in accordance with Canon Law.

For purposes of this writing, I am not going to worry about liceity because in the last analysis "everyone is somebody's heretic, everyone is somebody's schismatic." In essence everyone out there is breaking someone's rules for liceity, and the matter has little bearing on our discussion anyway.

Form, Matter, and Intent

The criteria for a Sacrament to be valid are *form, matter, and intent*. The *intent* is generally describes as intending "to do what the Church does" by way of the sacramental ritual (regeneration in Baptism, transubstantiation in the Eucharist, etc.). The *matter* is the physical medium through which – or onto which – the intention is manifested (e.g. water for Baptism, bread and wine for the Eucharist, etc.) The *form* refers to the words through which the intension is projected and made known ("I baptize thee," "This is my Body," etc.).

Catholic teaching holds that it does not matter whether the celebrant is a heretic, schismatic, or apostate, or living in a state of mortal sin. All that matters is when form, matter, and intent are in line with the prescribed usages of the Church, and the person performing the rite has validly received the sacrament of Ordination (necessary for all rites except Baptism and Matrimony), then the sacrament is valid.

Character Sacraments (and "Sacramental Character")

In Catholic theology, there are three sacraments – Baptism, Confirmation, and Ordination – that are considered *character sacraments*, because these three are believed to imprint a permanent "mark on the soul," technically known as the *sacramental character*. This character is said to be permanent, and cannot be taken away or surrendered by any means; as a result, once these sacraments are received validly, the Catholic Church considers it an act of *sacrilege* to repeat them.

Subconditional (Also "Conditional" or "Sub Conditione")

One encounters the phrase *sub conditione* often when studying both Traditional Roman Catholic and Independent Sacramental lineages. In its simplest form, this phrase means a character sacrament can be repeated *under the condition* that the first time it was received was invalid, in order to ensure validity. The most common example of this happens in the case of *lay baptism*, where a layperson confers baptism upon an infant in danger of death. If the child survives, the practice is for a priest to "supply ceremonies" (i.e. perform the ceremonies that accompany the baptism), and say the words of baptism conditionally "just in case" the layperson may not have done it correctly. In the case of *sub conditione* baptism, the words are changed to "*If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

In the Traditional Roman Catholic movement, especially in the smaller groups, one may find subconditional ordination and occasionally episcopal consecration practiced when a candidate has doubts about the ordinations they had received, but it is rare to find a cleric who has done this more than once.

In the Independent Sacramental Movement, it is a common practice to confer priestly ordination and especially episcopal consecration even when there is no question of validity. For some bishops, it may be a matter of administrative policy to "sub-con" any priest entering their jurisdiction (see below), and some bishops perceive receiving conditional consecration multiple seen as a way of "strengthening their lineage" or of "collecting lineages." What makes this practice interesting is that while the ISM has no centralized or standard

"required doctrine," most are in agreement that it takes only one line of apostolic succession in order to have received consecration validly.

Heresy, Apostasy, Schism

These are emotionally-charged words that come up a lot in these type of discussions, so it may be a good idea to define them here. *Heresy* is the open and obstinate denial of some defined article of the Catholic faith (transubstantiation, purgatory, etc.). *Schism* is a refusal to be in union with a church hierarchy (it refers to a person "cutting oneself off" from the group, or a group cutting itself off from another). *Apostasy* is when a person leaves behind the Christian faith altogether and no longer professes to be a Christian (this word is the direct opposite of *convert*).

Old Catholic Churches

The *Old Catholic Churches* are a family of churches concentrated in Continental Europe, originally in the Netherlands but spread internationally after 1870 when Fr. Ignaz von Döllinger rejected the First Vatican Council's definition of Papal Infallibility (the word "old" refers here to "older belief, before Papal Infallibility"). Old Catholics retain valid lines of apostolic succession and valid sacraments, and are responsible for supplying consecrations to Anglican bishops during the Bonn Agreement of 1931. In spite of attempts in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Old Catholic churches were generally unsuccessful in planting mainstream churches in the Anglosphere, and their lines of succession can now be found in both the Independent Sacramental Movement and the Traditional Catholic Movement.

Independent Sacramental Movement

The *Independent Sacramental Movement* is also known as the *Independent Movement* or the *Independent Catholic Movement*, a very loose collection of autocephalous (self-governing) churches (mostly composed of clergy) with lines of apostolic succession typically descending from the Old Catholic Churches, the Antiochian and Russian Orthodox Churches, the Anglican Communion, the Catholic Apostolic Church of Brazil (which broke away from Rome in 1945 under Bishop Duarte Costa), the Novus Ordo Church, and various other bishops who for some reason or other broke away from the larger churches in waves

between roughly 1724 (the Dutch Old Catholics) and 2006 (when former Novus Ordo bishop Emmanuel Milingo consecrated six Independent bishops *sub conditione*).

The Independent Movement is complex and decentralized, making it difficult to give a coherent snapshot within one or two paragraphs. For a solid introductory text, I would recommend Bishop John Plummer's *The Many Paths of the Sacramental Movement*, which is even-handed and well-written.

Jurisdiction

The Independent Sacramental Movement is not a unified entity (though maybe unified in its decentralization), but consists of many autonomous groups called *jurisdictions*. To the average observer, the word "jurisdiction" can be seen as synonymous with "denomination," though ISM clergy themselves do not often view it in the same terms.

Among Traditional Roman Catholics, the word "jurisdiction" is avoided because it refers to *power of jurisdiction*, ecclesiastical authority that derives from the Pope and the bishops in union with him (which the breaks down into distinctions between *ordinary* versus *extraordinary* jurisdiction, exceptions in the name of *epikeia*, and so forth). No matter what side they may take on the *sede* question, Traditionalists tend to recognize they have no union with the Papacy, and prefer to avoid words that are intimately associated therewith (they call themselves "Roman" because "Rome" is defined differently, see below).

For this reason, it is common to see Traditionalists calling their groups "Societies," or "Fraternities," and so forth, while Independents identify their organizations as "Churches" with a capital "C."

Rome

Independents, Novus Ordinarians, and Traditional Catholics all tend to define their position with some reference to "Rome" or, as Independents tend to say, "the Romans." What that word means to each group, however, tends to differ.

For Novus Ordinarians, the word "Rome" means something very physical: the physical city of Rome, particularly the physical location known as Vatican City. Likewise, they define "being in union with Rome" or "being Roman" as being obedient to the man who physically sits on the throne dubbed "The Chair of Saint Peter" and those that man has deputed as his representative throughout the world (the bishops), a member in good standing of the institution this man rules, and compliant to this institution's "magisterium" (teaching authority), accepting every decision up to and including Vatican II and its aftermath with little room for question. This is how Novus Ordinarians tend to define "Rome," "being Catholic," and "being Roman," though some may differ on the amount of latitude allowed for questioning authority.

Independents tend to define "Rome" the same way as Novus Ordinarians, though oftentimes "Rome" is the subject of derision and something the Independents may be glad to "be free from," although some Independent clergy on the more "conservative" side of the spectrum – either secretly or openly – wish they could be in union with this version of "Rome." At least one such group (the Augustana Catholic Church) has formally petitioned the Vatican to accept them through the Anglican Ordinariate; as of 2020, I do not know whether this petition has been accepted.

For a Traditional Catholic, the word "Rome" refers not to a physical location in Italy, but adherence to the consistent teaching of the Roman Catholic Church from her foundation in 33 A.D. up to the middle of the 20th century. This distinction – between the physical city and the consistent teaching – is set out clearly in the 1974 declaration of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (1905-1991), founder of the Society of Saint Pius X (the largest of the Traditional Catholic groups):

> *We hold fast, with all our heart and with all our soul, to Catholic Rome, Guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the traditions necessary to preserve this faith, to Eternal Rome, Mistress of wisdom and truth.*
>
> *We refuse, on the other hand, and have always refused to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which were clearly*

evident in the Second Vatican Council and, after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it.

The seed of this attitude can be found in the Early Church, first in a letter from St. Athanasius (296-373) to Catholics suffering persecution during the Arian Crisis of the fourth century:

They are, it is true, in the buildings, but outside of the true Faith; while you are outside the buildings indeed, but the Faith, within you. Let us consider whether is the greater, the building or the Faith. Clearly the true Faith. Who then has lost more, or who possesses more? He who holds the buildings, or he who holds the Faith?

This is expanded in the *Commonitorium* of St. Vincent of Lerins (d. 450), when he defines what it means for something to be called "Catholic." This is known as the *Vincentian Canon*, and has historically been Catholicism's principle of self-definition:

That which is Catholic is that which has been believed everywhere, always, and by all.

To the Traditional Catholic, this means that if the post-Vatican II Church teaches something different from the Church prior to Vatican II, then the post-Vatican II Church ceases to be Catholic; this is why they identify it as the *Novus Ordo Church* and its members as *Novus Ordinarians*. According to a Traditional Catholic, not even a sitting Pope is above this principle, because the Pope is not above Christ. Hence if "Rome" is to be identified with consistent teaching, then "Rome" cannot be identified as a fixed institution or physical location if said institution or location are perceived as departing from that teaching.

Also of note is that Traditionalists and Novus Ordinarians are insistent that one cannot be Catholic without being Roman (as per their preferred definition of the word), while Independents reject the word "Roman" in favor of Anglican "branch theory;" in fact it was once common to find Independents posting statements like the following on social media: "Not all Catholics are Roman, but all Catholics are one."

As with all statements in this writing, my purpose is to give information, not to sway opinions. I leave it to the reader to decide which side to take, if any side at all.

Occultism

Most Christians would likely define *occultism* as "devil worship" and most occultists would likely define it as "the study of hidden knowledge," but I take issue with both terms. Most occultists do not worship the devil on the one hand, and on the other the knowledge that makes up most of "occultism" is by no means hidden.

In my own experience and observation, occultists tend to study and practice systems of information that claim to lead either to direct experience of God and/or the spiritual realms, or which claim to manifest physical goals by way of non-physical or partially-physical means (*magic*, a word which has multiple definitions among occultists). What most occultists will not admit or likely be aware of is that these systems of information, in turn, tend to become formulated into doctrinal systems believed with the fervor of any other ideology or religion. In fact occultism often tends to straddle the borders between religion, ideology, and spirituality, with almost as many systems as there are practitioners.

Gnosticism

Scholars often define *Gnosticism* as a diverse constellation of Intertestamental Jewish and Early Christian movements that stressed personal experience (*gnosis*) over creedal orthodoxy (loosely described as *pistis*). Features of classical Gnosticism tended to include (but were not limited to) a separation between "vulgar" and "initiated" knowledge, a *dualism* separating the true unknowable God from the *demiurge* which made the physical universe, a system of *archons* or separating the spiritual from the spheres of the physical (this is a gross oversimplification), and a sort of "system" by which an individual soul may learn to transcend the archons and become free of the realm of matter.

While mostly associated with the Christianity of the first three centuries in the common imagination, interest in Gnosticism saw a revival in 19th-century France, at roughly the same time as the

Victorian Occult Revival in England. Many of these churches can now be called "Ecclesiastical Gnostic" churches, which identify themselves as Christian and have acquired apostolic succession. Perhaps the most visible example of Ecclesiastical Gnosticism is the *Ecclesia Gnostica* of Bishop Stephan Hoeller.

This "Ecclesiastical Gnosticism" can be contrasted against the "Thelemite Gnosticism" coming from the *Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica* of Aleister Crowley. The EGC does not officially present itself as Christian and does not claim a Christian apostolic succession, although individual bishops in the EGC may have acquired apostolic succession from sources within the Independent Movement. This makes for a complicated picture, the sorting of which is far outside the scope of this writing.

Rosicrucianism

In 1611, two documents circulated around Europe claiming to be the "Fame" and the "Confession" of the Fraternity of the Rose Cross, titled in Latin as *Fama Fraternitatis* and *Confessio Fraternitatis*, respectively. The theology of the documents could be considered an "esoteric confessional Lutheranism," overlapping Christianity with Kabbalistic practice, and it contained a story about the Fraternity's founder, Christian Rosenkreutz, who lived in the 14th century and how he established the order, which was just now announcing its existence to the public and accepting new members.

Nobody knows for sure whether there was an actual "Brotherhood of the Rose Cross" at the time, or if the documents were the equivalent of today's "internet trolling." What we do know for sure, though, is that the idea of such a fraternity attracted many intellectuals throughout Europe, and some began their own "Rosicrucian" orders. This eventually became a tradition in its own right, sometimes confessionally Christian and other times intermixed with ancient Egyptian mythology, the latter form which is best known through the *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn*, a number of its particular teachings derived from an irregular Masonic lodge in Germany named "Light, Life, Love" and operating in the vicinity of Nuremburg.

Rosicrucianism today attracts the interest of many occultists, some who look at it as a philosophy, some who look at it as a form of mysticism, and others who look to it as a foundation for a system of magic. There are also many groups claiming a Rosicrucian lineage, some who claim to be the "true successors" to Christian Rosenkreutz and his disciples. As with controversies about Gnosticism, such claims are outside the scope of this writing; what is sufficient is that some Rosicrucian groups exist with claims to apostolic succession, and aspect will be our focus later on.

Martinism

If Rosicrucianism can be considered an esoteric form of Lutheranism and the Golden Dawn an esoteric form of Anglicanism (in its "latitudinarian" form), then *Martinism* can be considered an esoteric form of French Catholicism-cum-Masonry-cum-Kabbalah.

Originally founded by Martinez de Pasqually (1727-1774) around 1740, Martinism is built upon a degree system and focuses on the *reintegration* of man toward being able to perceive the Beatific Vision while still living. Martinism as we know it today owes much to the work of Pasqually's student, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), and the 19th-century Freemason Gerard Encausse (also known as "Papus," 1865-1916), who "reorganized" the Martinist Order in 1886. Much like modern Rosicrucianism, modern-day Martinism can be found in different groups, each with their own "take" on the teaching.

Two: Independent Lineages, an Origin Story

In order to understand how occult lineages made their way into the Traditional Catholic Movement, one first needs to understand how occultists managed to obtain apostolic succession in the first place. The short answer is that they obtained these lineages by way of "breakaway bishops" who split from the larger apostolic churches in various waves between 1724 (with four Jansenist bishops consecrated by Dominque Varlet) and 2006 (with six ISM bishops consecrated by Emmanuel Milingo).

Much of this history can be found in detail elsewhere, so I ask indulgence to restrict myself to the "highlights" for the sake of not overburdening the reader's patience or attention span.

First Wave: Jansenism in the Netherlands

We can first begin with the first group to break away from Roman Catholic authority. While that can be considered the *Old Catholic* schism under Döllinger in 1870, the apostolic succession upholding this schism can be traced to the Netherlands some 150 years earlier.

If we give a "Cliff Notes version" of the history, we can say the schism in the Netherlands is a result of two factors in the Church's history there: 1) the Church in the Netherlands claimed a right to elect its own bishops independently of Rome (a right which Rome disputed), and 2) the Protestant Revolt – followed by the Calvinist takeover of the Netherlands – caused Catholics to go into hiding and the dioceses to be dissolved as early as 1580.

Within the Church in the Netherlands, there grew an affinity for a French-originated heresy known as Jansenism, which can be described (again, in keeping with our "Cliff Notes" format) as being a hybrid between Catholic sacramentology and Calvinist "TULIP" soteriology, claiming for itself the actual teaching of St. Augustine. The origins, history, and exact content of Jansenism are convoluted and outside the scope of this writing; it thus suffices to say Jansenist sentiment was more congenial to the Calvinist ruling class in the Netherlands, as well as their "being on the outs" with Rome.

This caused a problem at the dawn of the 18th century with the death of the last bishop in the Netherlands, Peter Codde (1648-1710), and poorer Catholics in the Netherlands (those unable to travel elsewhere) were left without a bishop to administer confirmations. Into this milieu came Dominique Marie Varlet, a newly-consecrated French bishop with sympathies toward Jansenism, who stopped through the Netherlands on the way to his appointed see of Babylon in Persia. Upon hearing of the Church's plight, he agreed to confirm 604 people in Amsterdam in 1718.

It turns out, however, that Varlet had neglected to call upon the papal nuncio in Brussels and give adherence to the bull *Unigenitus*, which condemned Jansenism. As a result, Rome suspended his episcopate in 1719, on that account and also the claim he administered confirmations without permission from the proper authorities. From here, the story becomes somewhat convoluted, but what is important is that Varlet ultimately made his home in the Netherlands and consecrated four bishops for the Church there between the years 1724 and 1739. The last of these four, Peter John Meindaerts (1684-1767), is the source of apostolic succession for the Old Catholic Churches both on the Continent, and their generally-unrecognized cousins in the Anglosphere.

Second Wave: The Old Catholics after the First Vatican Council

For 150 years the Church of Utrecht remained a local phenomenon, retaining their apostolic succession, consecrating their own bishops, administering the Sacraments to the faithful, and going on with life without oversight from Rome. In fact Rome had made attempts to regain control over the region before and since Varlet's consecration of the Dutch bishops, going so far as to "re-establish the Episcopal hierarchy" (read: send in a bishop in union with Rome) in 1853 after the Dutch government allowed Catholics to worship publicly once more.

As a response to Rome sending in a new bishop and hierarchy, the Ultrajectine Church (the Church of Utrecht) began to call themselves "Old Catholic," on account of the fact they were there *before* 1853, therefore the older of the two churches in the country. This would

still have remained a local phenomenon, however, had it not been for the First Vatican Council.

Every believing Catholic knows that the First Vatican Council brought with it the definition of *Papal Infallibility* which, though very limited in its actual scope and teaching, represented a victory for the Ultramontanist Party (which supported the vision of the Church as ruled by a monarchical Pope) over the Gallicanist Movement (which supported a more "conciliar" model of the Church, denying a Pope's authority in temporal matters and teaching that a Pope's decisions could be appealed to an Ecumenical Council).

Rome's declaration in favor of Papal Infallibility – the dogmatic constitution *Pastor Aeternus* – proved a powder keg for some clergy in Germany and Switzerland. Led by the priest Ignaz Döllinger, dissenting clergy held a convention in Munich in 1871, the "First Old Catholic Congress," with the "Old" in "Old Catholic" meaning they believed in the older form of Catholicism (i.e. the form of Catholicism that did not teach Papal Infallibility as a dogma). These churches gained the support not only of the German government (where they are still an established religious body to this day), but also of the Old Catholics in the Netherlands, who supplied them with apostolic succession by consecrating their bishops. For any reader interested in names and dates: the first German Old Catholic bishop, Joseph Hubert Reinkens, was consecrated in 1873 by then-Bishop of Utrecht Johannes Heykamp; Bishop Reinkens then consecrated Edward Herzog for the Swiss Old Catholic Church in 1876.

While the German and Swiss Old Catholics pass out of our story at this point, their existence as "National Churches" is important because it illuminates some of the other successions yet to be examined, as well as how Old Catholic lineages made their way into the Anglosphere.

Third Wave: Attempts at Forming National Churches

After the definition of Papal Infallibility and the formation of the Old Catholic Church in Germany, other bishops similarly attempted to create "National Churches." One such attempt, though tangential to our story, can be traced to José Ignacio Eduardo Sánchez y Camacho

(1838-1920), bishop of Ciudad Victoria-Tamaulipas, Mexico from 1880 until his resignation in 1896.

Bishop Sánchez was an outspoken anti-apparitionist who resigned in the midst of the "Guadalupan Controversy," though it seems unlikely the controversy played much part in his resignation. According to Fr. Stafford Poole's description of Sánchez in his *The Guadalupan Controversies in Mexico*, in 1895 four priests from his diocese had sent a letter to the Holy See accusing Sánchez of "drunkenness, greed, suspect relations with women, and neglect of the government of his diocese."

These accusations need not detain us for long, only enough to say that the Holy See called them "generic," and instructed the Papal visitor, Archbishop Nicola Averardi that these accusations "needed proof." Averardi found these allegations to have some basis in fact along with the possibility Sánchez may have been a Freemason while serving as a diocesan priest, but our greater concern is Sánchez' life *after* he resigned from the Church of Rome.

After resigning from his bishopric, Sánchez retired into obscurity but expressed support for a Mexican national church outside the authority of the Holy See and more or less Gallican in its governance and character. This vision became a reality in 1925 – five years after his death – with the establishment of the *Iglesia Católica Apostólica Mexicana*. The new patriarch of this national church, a Freemason and former Roman priest named José Joaquín Pérez Budar, was consecrated by Henry Carmel Carfora of the *North American Old Roman Catholic Church* in 1926 and was ultimately unsuccessful in its attempt to become the National Church of Mexico, beyond which point this church body passes out of our story.

Bishop Sánchez-Comacho's main importance to our story is found in the Independent Sacramental Movement's claim to apostolic succession coming from him, by way of a story that during a visit to Italy in 1899, he allegedly consecrated an Englishman by the name of Edward Rufane Benedict Donkin (1871-1906). Donkin then proceeded to confer the episcopate upon two Protestant ministers, Ulric Hereford and Herbert Heard, who then went on to consecrate others into the early Independent Sacramental Movement.

As to Donkin, whose real name seems to have been Montague Villiers, we can reasonably doubt whether Sánchez actually consecrated him. We can find a great deal of documentation in the January 18, 1906, edition of *Truth* that Donkin had a history as a con-artist who found himself in and out of court on account of his schemes, and was not afraid of forging documents. He did manage to obtain ordination to the priesthood at the hands of Bishop René Vilatte (a significant figure whom we will discuss later), only to be denounced by Vilatte upon finding him a "first-class swindler."

The same issue of *Truth* also includes a letter written by Vilatte to a "Mr. Fisher," in response to an inquiry about Donkin. We include the letter here in its entirety, exactly as it is quoted in that issue:

> *Dear Sir, – You will pardon me if I address you incorrectly, as your signature is not to be deciphered. With regard to "Donkin" – or whatever name he is known by now – I desire to say that you could take much information about him by reading Truth, of London, of August 4, 1904, and especially the number of September 22, 1904, pages 707 and 708.*
>
> *When he came to me in America in 1896 he posed as "The Rev. Fr. Dominic, O.S.A., Church of England Missioner, St. Augustine's Priory, London," and as such he was asked by the Protestant Episcopal clergy of Milwaukee to preach in their cathedral. He also pretended to start an "Order of the Red Cord," initiating several ladies and clergy of that town! He then came on to me (introduced by one of my priests, whom he had humbugged and swindled) and claimed to be the son of the Duke of Devon, with the title of Lord Cortenay. However, the Duke has long ago declared him to be an impostor.*
>
> *As he "took in" the clergy of Milwaukee, Father Ignatius, and many others, so I was completely blinded and did ordain him to the Priesthood.*
>
> *About eighteen months afterwards his true character was discovered, and I deposed and degraded him. Afterwards he started an "Independent Church" in Cleveland. Here there was a big and shocking scandal. He was arrested and condemned, but escaped to Italy -- according to the Public Press.*

He posed as a bishop in Cleveland, but, as far as I can ascertain, he has never *received Episcopal Consecration. Donkin never belonged to any "community" in our Church – but to go into details of this man's frauds would take up too much time. To be brief, Donkin is a* first-class swindler. *If anything is published about him, please send me clipping.*

Hoping I have answered your letter sufficiently, etc.

There is likewise a transcription of Donkin's consecration certificate which may or may not be genuine. The entire text of the document is given below:

PAX.

In the Name of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity. Amen.

To all who may read these letters Testimonial, Salutation and Apostolic Benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We, Eduard Sánchez y Comacho, by Divine Providence Bishop of the Catholic Church, validly consecrated, and for sixteen years Roman Catholic Bishop of Ciudad Victoria, Mexico.

Declare that on the Sixteenth (16th) day of December, 1903, We raised and consecrated tothe Dignity of Bishop the priest and Abbot Edward Rufane Benedict Donkin, O.S.B., using at the Ceremony of Consecration the Latin Rite, according to the "Pontificale Romanum." The Consecration taking place in the presence of and assisted by Don Jellis and Don Andrea Lombardo, priests. We confer full power of jurisdiction upon the said Right Rev E. R. Benedict Donkin, O.S.B., our Vicar Apostolic. With the Titular Title of Bishop of Holy Cross in Antioch.

In faith we hereby give our Seal and Signature to these presents. This 16th Day of December, 1903, at Naples, Italy, from our temporary Chapel.

Upon reading the document, my own opinion is one of skepticism. The reason for my skepticism is found in phrases such as "validly

consecrated," a feature of Independent consecration certificates but not something a Roman bishop would consider. This may also make sense in context of Donkin's Anglican background and the point in history where this would have taken place, as many Anglican clergy were insecure about the validity of their Orders in the aftermath of *Apostolicae Curae*, and some sought out Old Catholic or Roman Catholic bishops to make that validity certain.

Another reason for skepticism is the certificate's claim that "We confer full power of jurisdiction." Just like the phrase "validly consecrated," this again is not something a Roman bishop would say; the reason is that within Roman Catholicism, power of jurisdiction is conferred by the Pope alone, and those in union with him. That Sánchez had broken with Rome in 1896 tells us that he would not likely have claimed to confer power of jurisdiction (I say "not likely" because his reasons for the break would not exclude the possibility), much less name someone as "Titular Bishop of Holy Cross of Antioch," a titular see which did not even exist!

Lastly, the certificate is too specific about the rite being used, down to the actual book. This is another feature of Independent certificates and one for which we can be grateful, but Roman certificates usually just state "juxta ritum S.R.E., servatis omnibus servandis" and leave it at that (translation: *according to the rite of the Holy Roman Church, all things to be observed having been observed*). This is because the Roman Catholic Church only used the ceremonies in the *Pontificale Romanum*, hence no need to specify exactly which ritual-book was used, only that the rite's necessary components were observed in the process.

In short, the question of Donkin's alleged consecration reminds me very much of the "Charles Roux lineage" controversy found in Traditional Roman Catholic circles. If Donkin had not had a history for fraud, forgery, and swindling, I would be more inclined to charity concerning the report of his consecration. Now it is possible that Donkin talked Sánchez into consecrating him, and it is also possible Donkin wrote the consecration certificate and Sánchez gave it his signature (which would explain the emphasis on validity and spelling out what rite was used). Though because of Donkin's track record – and only because of his track record – I would pronounce any consecrations derived from him as "50/50 doubtful" in theory and

treat them as invalid in practice, until such time as reliable documentation can be found.

Fortunately the question of Donkin's validity has been made moot by the Independent Movement's practice of receiving multiple subconditional consecrations, as most modern-day bishops possessing lineage from Donkin also possess lineages from others who are in the "certainly valid" category.

Joseph René Vilatte, or, Where Things Get Interesting

Now we come to wrapping up this phase of our story, with the main conduits by which apostolic succession reached the Independent Movement (and later, many smaller Traditional Roman Catholic groups) within the Anglosphere in general and the United States in particular. This story brings us to three men: Joseph René Vilatte, Arnold Harris Matthew, and Carmel Henry Carfora. As Vilatte is the source for occultist lineages found within the Traditional Roman Catholic movement, he is the only one we currently need to discuss in detail.

Joseph René Vilatte (1854-1929) is perhaps the most interesting of the three, and his lineage is most prominent among the occult successions found among Traditional Catholic bishops today. Vilatte was born into a family belonging to the *Petit Église*, a schismatic group that broke with from the Roman Catholic Church after the latter signed a concordat with Napoleon in 1801, the concordat had disaffected many clergy, peasants, and former royalists. Of the several groups that broke from the Roman Church at the time, it was the Petit Église that soon became dominant, originally under two bishops: Jean-Charles de Coucy (1746-1824) and Alexandre-François-Amédée-Adonis-Louis-Joseph de Lauzières de Thémines (1742-1829). These two did not consecrate further bishops, meaning that after Thémines' death in 1829 and with the church's priests either dying or reconciling to Rome with no one to replace, them, the group was clergy-less by the time of Vilatte's birth (the last of their members reconciled with Rome in 1911).

All of this may be inconsequential, however, as different sources give conflicting accounts of Vilatte's childhood. Some say he was raised in

the Petite Église by his grandparents, others say he was placed in a Roman Catholic orphanage after his parents died.

Vilatte's story, like that of many independent clergy, is one of religious drifting and exploration, which in his case led him to America, to acquaintance with former priest and professional anti-Catholic Charles Chiniquy (author of *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*), to conversion to Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterian Church USA appointing him a missionary for French-speaking people in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and the surrounding area in 1884. His efforts were unsuccessful, and his next step was to speak to Bishop John Henry Hobart Brown (1831-1888) of the Protestant Episcopal Church's diocese of Fond du Lac, for ministry and mission work there.

Brown had no use for Vilatte as an Episcopal priest, but arranged for him to be ordained by the Old Catholics in Switzerland to set up an Old Catholic mission to a group of confessionally-Catholic immigrants from Belgium who had broken from the Roman Church. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 7, 1885, by Bishop Edward Herzog in Bern, Switzerland, and came back to the Wisconsin to begin his work at the Bon Pasteur ("Good Shepherd") mission in the settlement of Little Sturgeon. The story goes that Vilatte's work went well until Bishop Brown's successor, Bishop Charles Chapman Grafton (1830-1912), sought to have more control over Vilatte's mission, possibly as part of correcting the canonical irregularity created by Brown in setting up the mission, and possibly as part of his plans for expanding the diocese (this expansion was successful, with its current boundaries being defined sixteen years after Grafton's death in 1912).

Vilatte seems to have been prone to wanderlust (with which I can somewhat identify), and the experience with Grafton turned him into more of a "wanderer." He began seeking episcopal consecration so he could continue his work, being refused by the Old Catholics because Grafton (who did not like Vilatte) heard they were in dialogue and wrote a bad letter of reference for him. Eventually Vilatte found consecration from the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch on May 29, 1892, at the hands of Antonio Francisco Xavier Alvares (1836-1923), and given the title of "Mar Timotheos, Jacobite Old Catholic Bishop of North America."

Upon returning to America, Vilatte resumed ministering to his flock in Wisconsin (estimated at about 500 at the time), amidst opposition from Bishop Grafton (who excommunicated him) and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Green Bay (which sent priests to "sheep-steal" his parishioners). The latter were ultimately successful, and Vilatte ultimately found himself wandering yet again.

The reason for this somewhat long biography (composed of information already known to specialists) is that Vilatte is an important figure in our story, but the general reader is unlikely to have heard of him, or of any of the other people or events described thus far.

While his later career found him in France and the United States (where he founded the "American Catholic Church") – peppered with attempts at reconciling with the Catholic Church on occasion – Vilatte is best known for consecrating multiple bishops during his lifetime. Some of these bishops he consecrated for ethnic or national churches – such as Bishop George Alxender McGuire (1866-1934) for the African Orthodox Church or Stephen Kaminski (1859-1911) for the Polish Catholic Church in Buffalo – as well ordaining the occultist Louis-Marie-François Giraud (1876-1951) to the priesthood in 1907.

Vilatte's through a somewhat circuitous route, Giraud would receive apostolic succession from Vilatte, and many *Ecclesiastical Gnostics* derive their succession from him.

Our story here draws to an end with Vilatte returning to France in 1922 and reconciling with Rome in 1925. He lived the remaining four years of his life at a Cistercian monastery, dying of heart failure on July 8, 1929.

While Rome never allowed him to perform sacerdotal functions and buried him as a layman, they never claimed Vilatte's ordination and consecration were invalid. Rather, this is a refusal to discuss the question on Rome's part, as Rome's practice generally is to avoid public or "on the record" discussion of illicit ordinations, as indicated by the usual pronouncement of refusing to recognize the ordination's

canonical effect (i.e. giving placement in the Roman Catholic hierarchy), while qualifying it with the clause "whatever is about their validity" (in Latin: *quidquid est de ordinum validitate*).

On the one hand, this makes sense. If someone underwent the same ceremonies of becoming an officer in my clubhouse – but it happened *outside* my clubhouse and without the clubhouse's permission – then it stands to reason this person would not be an officer in my clubhouse (but maybe with some other organization).

To my mind, this method also seems to be a way of discouraging people from seeking ordinations by these bishops, as if someone can look at an official document claiming "See, Rome says this bishop's orders are valid! I can get ordained by him without having to go to seminary!" Well, then, it would encourage certain personality types to seek shortcuts to the priesthood, and the ability to point to an official document from Rome saying "This is valid" may encourage disaffected laity to join these new priests' congregations or even seek Holy Orders themselves. One can understand why the Vatican would not like that to happen.

In any case, the final Roman word about Vilatte comes on July 6, 1925, in a communiqué from the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris, Archbishop Bonaventura Ceretti:

> *Information 5,900: Mgr. Vilatte's Orders*
>
> *Mgr. Vilatte received the Minor Orders and the Order of the Subdeacon on June 5th, 1885, the Order of Deacon on June 6th of the same year and on the following day, i.e. June 7th, 1885, the Ordination to the Priesthood. All these Ordinations were conferred on him by Mgr. Herzog (Old Catholic Bishop) in the Old Catholic Church at Berne. This is provided by documents bearing the seal and signature of Mgr. Herzog.*
>
> *Concerning his Episcopal Consecration, it took place on May 29th, 1892. Mgr. Vilatte was consecrated by three Jacobite bishops in the Cathedral of Archbishop Alvarez (Julius the First), i.e. in the Church of Our Lady of Good Death in Colombo (Ceylon). Mgr. Vilatte is likewise in possession of the consecration deed in question bearing the*

signature of the three above named bishops and of the American Consul who was present at the ceremony.

+ B. Cerretti
Archbishop of Corinthia
Apostolic Nuncio

In essence there is no denial of validity. There is only a statement that they admit the ordinations happened, at the hands of bishops whom they themselves consider to be valid.

All in all, I find myself at a crossroads on how to evaluate Vilatte. Some of his actions were morally reprehensible (such as the attempt at simony before Kaminski's consecration). Yet as a person, reading his story gives me the impression of a genuinely good soul who was too naïve to recognize the company he kept, and was repeatedly taken advantage of by them.

In any case, here ends our story of René Vilatte. We will come back to him before long.

Three: Gnostics, Martinists, and Rosicrucians

Thus far we have traced some of the lineages found in the Independent Sacramental Movement, ending with René Vilatte. Now comes time to dip into the "meat" of this writing, namely the "occultist" lineages.

The main occult lineage in question does not start with Vilatte, but a few "steps" in succession after him. Let us discuss some of those steps and how they entered the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement.

Paolo Miraglia-Gulotti

The first after Vilatte in this lineage, is Paolo Miraglia Gulotti (1857-1918), born in Ucria, Sicily, who was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1879 at the age of 22. In 1895 he was sent to preach in Piacenza, in the Emiglia-Romagna region of Northern Italy, and in 1896 was excommunicated on account of preaching in favor of reform. One such description of his preaching comes to us from the Rev. R. J. Nevin, in the October 3, 1896 edition of the weekly periodical *The Churchman*, in a piece titled "The Modern Savonarola:"

The priest preached for twenty-five minutes on the Gospel. He maintained strenuously the doctrine of purgatory as true Catholic doctrine, which Protestants had done wrong in giving up, but he went on to say they had had great provocation from the wrong use that the Church had made of this doctrine, and then there followed a denunciation of the nineteenth century abuses of the doctrine of purgatory – the actual living abuses of the society around them – that Luther could not have put more strongly. (page 400)

In 1897, Miraglia attended the International Old Catholic Congress in Vienna, and his adherents began calling themselves the "Autonomous Italo-International Church," or *Chiesa Autonoma Italo-Internazionale*, and was consecrated bishop for this church by Vilatte on May 6, 1900, with the Holy See renewing Miraglia's excommunication on June 13 of the same year.

Miraglia's consecration may have been a mistake, and his reform was movement was suspended in 1901 as he fled the country and ultimately ended up working with Vilatte in Chicago.

Miraglia died on July 25, 1918. He himself was neither and occultist nor Gnostic to the best of my knowledge, just a pro-reform cleric who found himself on the wrong side of a schism from a schism.

Jules Houssaye

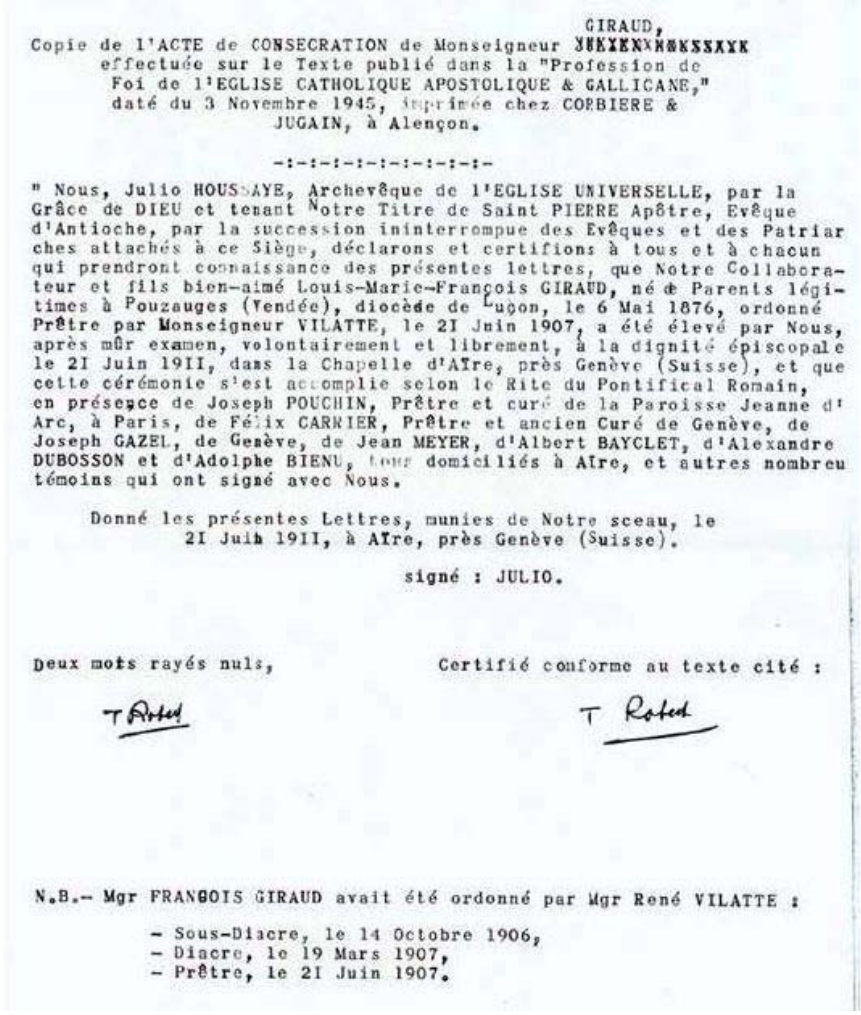
Our story moves forward with Jules Houssaye (1844-1912), consecrated by Paolo Miraglia-Gulotti on December 4, 1904, and bishop of a group calling itself *L'Eglise Universelle* (The Universal Church). I have not been able to find much information about Houssaye, but have come across the consecration certificate for the next step in this lineage, Louis Marie François Giraud, whom he consecrated on June 21, 1911.

Louis Marie François Giraud

The next in this lineage is Louis Marie François Giraud (1876-1951). This is the first positive evidence we see of occultists receiving the Vilatte lineage, or any apostolic succession along lines that would eventually "trickle down" into the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement.

At the age of 16, Giraud became a choir-brother at the Cistercian monastery of Fontgombault and had gone as far as receiving Minor Orders, before the monastery closed its doors in 1905. He later met Vilatte, who ordained him to the priesthood on June 21, 1907. On June 21, 1911, he was consecrated by Jules Ernest Houssaye as primate of the *L'Eglise Catholique Gallicane* (The Catholic Gallican Church).

Though I have heard it said that Giraud was alternately a Freemason, a Rosicrucian, or a Martinist, I have yet to encounter any first-hand documentation to that effect in a time where occult belief and practice was coming out into the open (the so-called "Occult Revival"). However, the "Tau Cross" next to the signature on his consecration certificate (see above) might provide us with some indication.



GIRAUD,
Copie de l'ACTE de CONSECRATION de Monseigneur XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
effectuée sur le Texte publié dans la "Profession de
Foi de l'EGLISE CATHOLIQUE APOSTOLIQUE & GALLICANE,"
daté du 3 Novembre 1945, imprimée chez CORBIERE &
JUGAIN, à Alençon.

-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-:-

" Nous, Julio HOUSSAYE, Archevêque de l'EGLISE UNIVERSELLE, par la Grâce de DIEU et tenant Notre Titre de Saint PIERRE Apôtre, Evêque d'Antioche, par la succession ininterrompue des Evêques et des Patriarches attachés à ce Siège, déclarons et certifions à tous et à chacun qui prendront connaissance des présentes lettres, que Notre Collaborateur et fils bien-aimé Louis-Marie-François GIRAUD, né de Parents légitimes à Pouzauges (Vendée), diocèse de Luçon, le 6 Mai 1876, ordonné Prêtre par Monseigneur VILATTE, le 21 Juin 1907, a été élevé par Nous, après mûr examen, volontairement et librement, à la dignité épiscopale le 21 Juin 1911, dans la Chapelle d'Aïre, près Genève (Suisse), et que cette cérémonie s'est accomplie selon le Rite du Pontifical Romain, en présence de Joseph POUCHIN, Prêtre et curé de la Paroisse Jeanne d'Arc, à Paris, de Félix CARRIER, Prêtre et ancien Curé de Genève, de Joseph GAZEL, de Genève, de Jean MEYER, d'Albert BAYCLET, d'Alexandre DUBOSSON et d'Adolphe BIENU, tous domiciliés à Aïre, et autres nombreux témoins qui ont signé avec Nous.

Donné les présentes Lettres, munies de Notre sceau, le
21 Juin 1911, à Aïre, près Genève (Suisse).

signé : JULIO.

Deux mots rayés nuls,

Certifié conforme au texte cité :

N.B.- Mgr FRANCOIS GIRAUD avait été ordonné par Mgr René VILATTE :

- Sous-Diacre, le 14 Octobre 1906,
- Diacre, le 19 Mars 1907,
- Prêtre, le 21 Juin 1907.

Giraud's consecration certificate.

Jean Bricaud

The Vilatte lineage truly finds itself in occult hands when we come to Jean Bricaud (1881-1934). A student of the occult, Bricaud found himself involved in the Universal Gnostic Church (*L'Eglise Gnostique Universelle*), a church which deserves some discussion before we move forward.

The Universal Gnostic Church was founded by Jules Doinel (Jules-Benoît Stanislas Doinel du Val-Michel, 1842-1903), a librarian and Grand Orient Freemason who became fascinated by the Cathars. He claimed that in 1888, he had a vision of Christ as "the Eon Jesus" who "consecrated him to the episcopate" as "Bishop of Montségur and Primate of the Albigenses," with the commission to revive the Gnostic churches.

In independent circles, this would be considered a "New Priesthood" or an "Esoteric Lineage" (as opposed to an "Exoteric Lineage," i.e. the laying on of hands with what is normally recognized as apostolic succession), so one would be correct in considering any consecration proceeding from Doinel as invalid or at least defective by Catholic standards. Fortunately, this is not an issue for the sake of our conversation (for those claiming apostolic succession for Aleister Crowley, this becomes a major issue excellently addressed by Stepan Hoeller in his "Position Paper Concerning the Thelemite or Crowleyan Gnostic Churches").

For our purposes, I regard the Doinel succession as invalid, if for no other reason because 1) he was not consecrated by a bishop in apostolic succession who used proper form, matter, and intent; 2) Doinel appeals to a claim of *private revelation*, which no one is obliged to believe including the recipient himself, and 3) we have no way of authenticating whether Doinel's vision was real, or the result of bad food or medication interaction, or if he made the whole thing up. While I am willing to admit (hypothetically) the Doinel lineage may be its own stream of spiritual transmission, it is clearly not a line of apostolic succession as we understand it in this writing.

In any case, in 1890 Doinel assumed the "Mystic Name" of Valentin II and proclaimed "The Era of Gnosis Restored." He then presumed to begin consecrating bishops, the practice being that each new bishop takes a Mystic Name for themselves prefixed with "Tau" for male candidates and "Sophia" for females. In 1895, Doinel was taken in by the so-called "Taxil Hoax," which caused him to abdicate his position in the Gnostic Church and reconcile with Roman Catholicism, after which he became a fervent anti-masonic polemicist.

During this time, the church's synod of bishops chose to consecrate more bishops in the Doinel succession, which led to the presumed consecration of Jean Bricaud in 1901 as "Tau Johannes." (He would also be known as "Tau Jean II.")

Jean Bricaud, in turn, was a former seminarian who had left seminary in favor of occult pursuits. In 1907, he broke from the Gnostic Church and founded his own sect with a structure and teaching closer to Catholicism than to Catharism. This schism was reconciled in 1908, with Bricaud elected as patriarch of the Universal Gnostic Church.

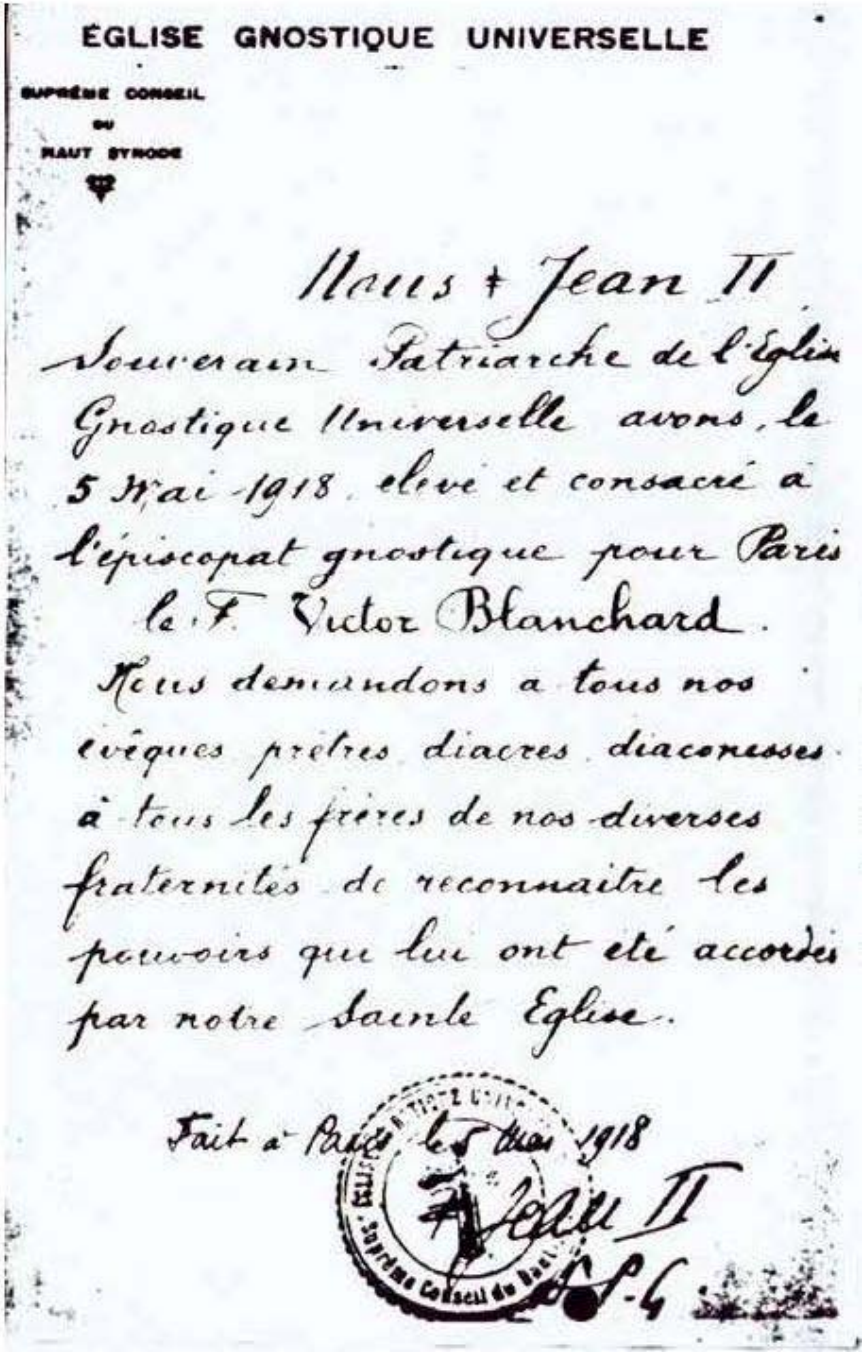
Bricaud was consecrated into the Vilatte line of apostolic succession by Louis Giraud on July 21, 1913, which is where we find an organized group of occultists getting their hands on apostolic succession.

This parallels a development occurring on the other side of the English Channel, where Old Roman Catholic bishop Arnold Harris Matthew consecrated Fredrick Samuel Willoughby (1862-1928), which would lead to a number of Theosophists receiving apostolic succession, and later founding the Liberal Catholic Church. There is one known *valid* line of succession leading from the Liberal Catholic Church to the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement (as Traditional Roman Catholics would define the word "valid"), which I will discuss once the Vilatte lineage ceases to hold our attention.

On may 5, 1918, Bricaud consecrated the next person in our lineage.

Victor Blanchard and Roger Menard

The next person in our lineage, Victor Blanchard (1878-1953), was Papus' secretary within the Martinist Order, and Sovereign Master of said order between the two world wars. In fact it should be pointed out that while this branch of the Vilatte lineage was being transmitted through a Gnostic church body, many of this church's bishops were also Martinists in addition to being Freemasons, so one can expect to see a high degree of cross-over among these three bodies.



ÉGLISE GNOSTIQUE UNIVERSELLE

SUPRÊME CONSEIL
DU
HAUT SYNODE

Nous † Jean II
Souverain Patriarche de l'Eglise
Gnostique Universelle avons, le
5 Mai 1918, élevé et consacré à
l'épiscopat gnostique pour Paris
le F. Victor Blanchard.
Nous demandons a tous nos
évêques prêtres diacres diaconesses
à tous les frères de nos diverses
fraternités de reconnaitre les
pouvoirs que lui ont été accordés
par notre Sainte Eglise.

Fait à Paris le 5 Mai 1918

Jean II

Suprême Conseil de Paris

Blanchard's consecration certificate

Blanchard was consecrated by Bricaud on May 5, 1918, under the name of "Tau Targelius," but quickly became hostile toward the latter, whom he ousted from the grandmaster position in the Martinist Order. (Anybody familiar with the history of occult orders will find no surprise at these kinds of antics, the sort of which we still see in the present day).

The next step in our lineage is Roger Ménard, whom Blanchard consecrated for the Universal Gnostic Church on January 7, 1945, taking the name "Tau Eon." I did not find much about Ménard, and so we will move to the next step in the line of succession.

Robert Ambelain, Roger Deschamps, Armand Toussaint

From Ménard, the line of succession next stops at Robert Ambelain (1907-1997), a follower of Blanchard and writer on the subjects of occultism, Martinism, and Freemasonry. He is probably most known for his work of hiding the archives of French esoteric orders from the Vichy government during World War 2 (the Vichy regime had outlawed such orders and their meetings, and in fact had executed the master of his lodge, Constat Chevillon).

Ambelain was consecrated to the episcopate by Ménard on June 10, 1946, taking the name "Tau Joannes III" or "Tau Jean III." Ambelain also renamed the Universal Gnostic Church in 1954 as the Gnostic Apostolic Church (L'Eglise Gnostique Apostolique), though the name "Universal Gnostic Church" is still in use today.

On May 31, 1959, Ambelain consecrated Roger Deschamps (d. December 23, 1964), who took the name "Tau Jean Rudiger." I can find very little information about Deschamps, and have noticed that the further along the line we find ourselves, the more scarce information becomes about this or that individual.

Deschamps, in turn, consecrated Armand Raymond Toussaint (1895-1994), who took the name "Tau Raymond Panagion," on June 1, 1963. In his *Manifestations of the Martinist Order*, Milko Bogaard describes Toussaint as "*a convinced humanitarian by nature … internationally orientated and more than interested in the fraternization of occult brotherhoods and societies*" (page 37). A testimony of his character is

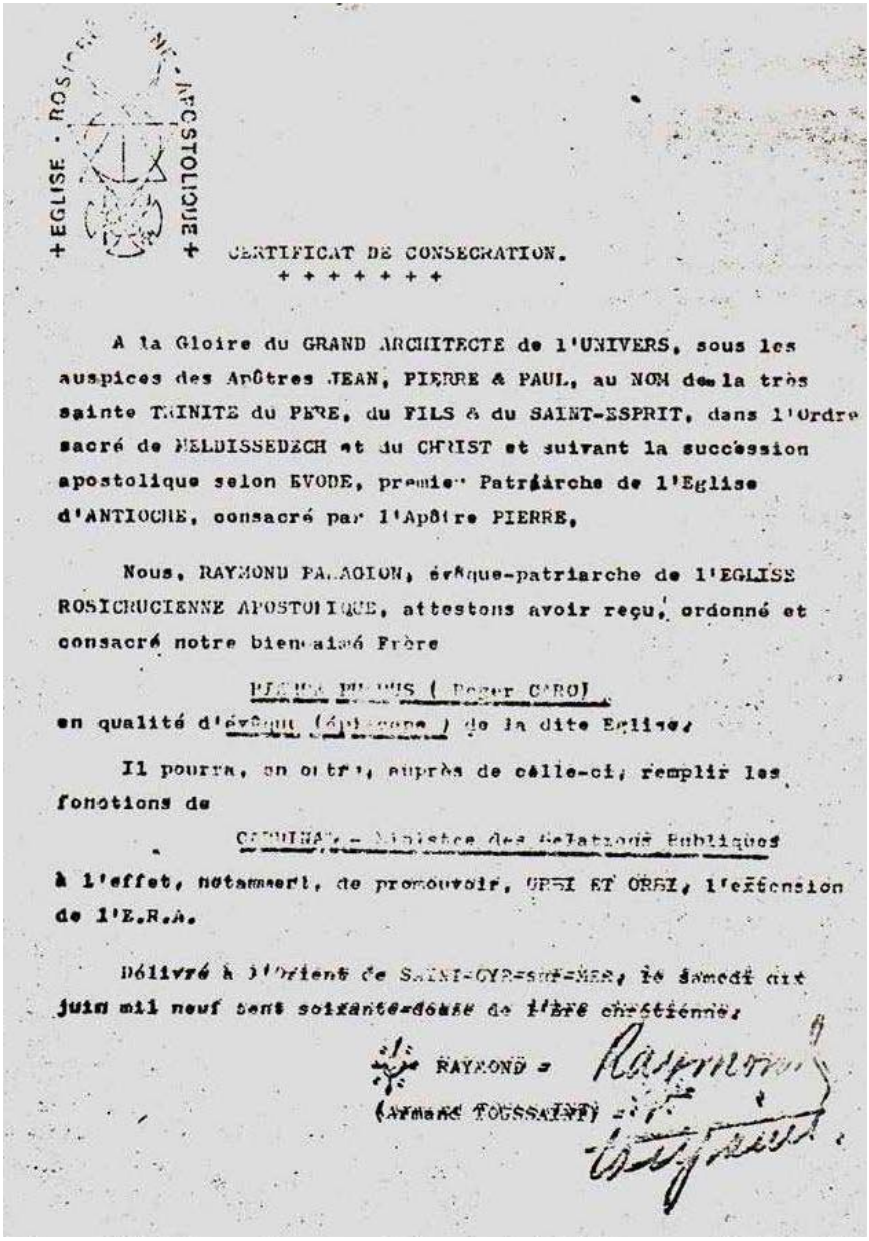
attributed to Bishop Philippe Laurent de Coster, bishop of the Latin Old Roman Catholic Church of Flanders: "*Armand Toussaint was a very decent man, it is possible to trust him absolutely.*"

Roger Caro and the Universal Church of the New Alliance

From Toussaint, the line moves to Roger Caro a.k.a. "Pierre Phoebus" (1911-1992), whom Toussaint consecrated on June 10, 1972. I present his consecration certificate on the facing page, though sadly the copy suffers from legibility issues.

Roger Caro is an interesting figure in his own right, the head or *Imperator* of the Elder Brothers of the Rose+Cross (*Frères Aînés de la Rose+Croix*), and consecrated as archbishop for its sister organization, the Universal Church of the New Alliance (*L`Eglise Universelle de la Nouvelle Alliance*).

I have not been able to find the specifics of this church's or the order's teaching, aside from the fact they celebrated the Traditional Latin Mass, and observed the Roman Ritual and Pontifical in the administration of the other sacraments (with some of their consecration certificates specifying "Catholic Rite" and others "Greek Rite"), and that they may have been more Catholic than Gnostic in their theological orientation. From what I understand, the church also served as a sort of "outer order" while the Elder Brothers served as an "inner order," its numbers being restricted to 33 members at any given time. This is actually something of a common arrangement with occult orders, the have an *outer order* open to the public and function somewhat like a church (sometimes with incorporation as one), while the occult work proper is found in the *inner order* whose teaching is limited either to full initiates only, or is parceled out in various stages according to a degree structure.



+EGLISE · ROS… …APOSTOLIQUE+

CERTIFICAT DE CONSECRATION.
+ + + + + + +

A la Gloire du GRAND ARCHITECTE de l'UNIVERS, sous les auspices des Apôtres JEAN, PIERRE & PAUL, au NOM de la très sainte TRINITE du PERE, du FILS & du SAINT-ESPRIT, dans l'Ordre sacré de MELDISSEDECH et du CHRIST et suivant la succession apostolique selon EVODE, premier Patriarche de l'Eglise d'ANTIOCHE, consacré par l'Apôtre PIERRE,

Nous, RAYMOND PALAGION, évêque-patriarche de l'EGLISE ROSICRUCIENNE APOSTOLIQUE, attestons avoir reçu, ordonné et consacré notre bien-aimé Frère

PIERRE PHILIPPE (Roger CARO)

en qualité d'évêque (épiscope) de la dite Eglise,

Il pourra, en outre, auprès de celle-ci, remplir les fonctions de

CARDINAL - Ministre des Relations Publiques

à l'effet, notamment, de promouvoir, URBI ET ORBI, l'extension de l'E.R.A.

Délivré à l'Orient de SAINT-CYR-sur-MER, le samedi dix juin mil neuf cent soixante-douze de l'ère chrétienne.

+ RAYMOND +
(Armand TOUSSAINT)

Caro's consecration certificate

Caro had numerous intercommunions with Independent church bodies, and exchange *sub conditione* consecrations with many of them. Thus it is from Caro that the occult lineage finds at least two points

of entry into the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement, one through Guy Jean Mamistra Olivares whom he consecrated on June 23, 1984 and who took the Gnostic name "Tau Joannes," and another through George Bellemare ("Jacques de Aurata Pellis"), whom he consecrated *sub conditione* on June 26, 1976. The Olivares line would find its way into the Traditional Movement by merging with the "Thuc-Datessen" lineage in 1987, while the Bellemare line would find its way into the Traditional Movement through the Andre Barbeau lineage possessed by many Traditionalist bishops in the smaller groups today (Bellemare consecrated Barbeau *sub conditione* in 1976). We are nearing the point of telling their stories.

Mamistra Olivares and the Traditional Movement

If one looks over the succession tables for a number of Traditionalist bishops with the "Thuc-Datessen" lineage, they will come across the name *Guy Jean Tau Joannes Mamistra Olivares*, sometimes written as *Guy Jean Tau Joannes de Mamistra.*

I have not been able to find any real biographical information about Bishop Mamistra Olivares, only that he died in 2012, and that Caro consecrated him for the *Universal Church of the New Alliance* in 1984 (as mentioned above). The moniker "Tau Joannes" tells us that he was either theologically Gnostic or may have had Gnostic sympathies, a "tell" unbeknownst to the majority of Traditional Roman Catholics who may come across his name on a succession chart (or even the majority of Novus Ordinarians!).

Mamistra Olivares marks two transitions for this branch of the "Vilatte-Bricaud" line of succession. First, he marks a point where this branch changes from French-speaking to Spanish-speaking hands. Second, he marks the first point of intersection between this occultist lineage and the decidedly anti-occultist "Thuc-Datessen" lineage of the Traditional Movement. The precise moment this happened was Mamistra Olivares entered the "Thuc-Datessen" lineage was with his *sub conditione* consecration by Pierre Salle on March 28, 1987 – Salle was consecrated by Christian-Marie Datessen (b. 1934) on June 27, 1983, and Datessen was a former Old Catholic bishop who was *sub conditione* consecrated by Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc on September 25, 1982 – and this lineage became a full part of the

Traditional movement when Mamistra Olivares consecrated the Sedevacantist bishop José-Ramon Lopez-Gaston (1928-2009) on June 29,1992.

Originally from Havana, Cuba, Lopez-Gaston was a married man – one of few married priests in the Traditional Movement which makes a sacred cow of clerical celibacy – ordained to the priesthood by Thucite bishop Moses Carmona Rivera upon the promise of renouncing his marital rights. He is known for his association with former Jesuit-turned-Traditionalist Malachi Martin, and for having ordained Rama Coomaraswamy (1929-2006, son of Perennialist thinker Ananda Coomaraswamy) to the priesthood. Lopez-Gaston is also known for having participated in the conclavist gathering which elected Victor von Pentz as "Pope Linus II" on June 29, 1994.

From here, the line stays within the Traditional Movement, passing on to José Franklin Urbina Aznar (b. 1940), whom Bishop Gaston-Lopez consecrated on June 26, 1994, changing from Spanish-speaking to English-speaking hands with Urbina's consecration of Merrill Adamson on September 4, 1999, and diffused through the Traditional Movement largely through Adamson's *sub conditione* consecration of the late Patrick Craig Taylor (1948-2018) on November 27, 2001.

George Bellemare and the Traditional Movement

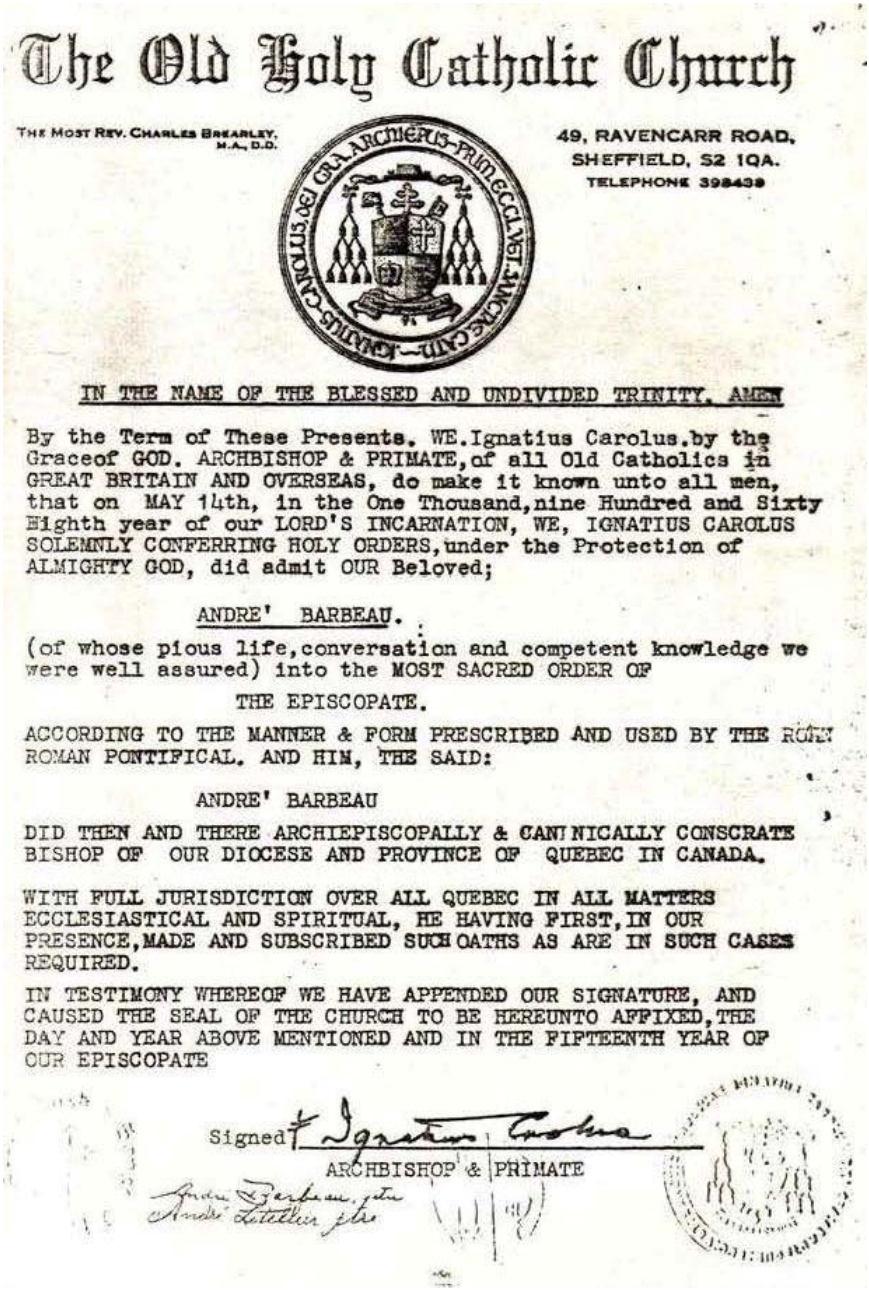
We have now finished discussing the first path through which a line of apostolic succession appropriated by occultists, Martinists, Gnostics, and Freemasons has entered the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement, a movement vehemently opposed to all of these things. We are now going to discuss a second pathway.

When we discussed Roger Caro, we mentioned that he had consecrated George Bellemare *sub conditione* on June 26, 1976. Bellemare's name is another that appears on apostolic succession tables but about whom I could find no personal information. Where the "Vilatte-Bricaud-Caro" lineage enters the Traditional Movement through Bellemare is his *sub conditione* consecration of André Léon Zotique Barbeau (1912-1994) on December 12, 1976, and Barbeau's lineage can be found among several Traditional Catholic bishops

(whether he consecrated them directly or through those consecrated by him).

André Barbeau

André Barbeau first enters our story as a priest ordained in the Diocese of Montreal, Quebec, on November 21, 1940, who left the Roman Catholic Church in 1968s. I have been unable to find the exact reason he left; some say he was troubled by the Second Vatican Council, while others say he wanted to "ride the wave" set out by it. The truth may be something of a middle ground, as he founded *The Holy Charismatic Catholic Church of Canada* in the same year (*Le Sainte Eglise Charismatique du Canada*), and was consecrated to the Episcopate by Charles Brearley of the *Old Holy Catholic Church* on May 14. Since I have seen some succession tables claiming this date was "December 21, 1969," I will share an image of the original consecration certificate, which clearly states "May 14th, in the One Thousand, nine hundredth and sixty-eight year of Our Lord's Incarnation."



The Old Holy Catholic Church

THE MOST REV. CHARLES BREARLEY, M.A., D.D.

49, RAVENCARR ROAD,
SHEFFIELD, S2 1QA.
TELEPHONE 398439

IN THE NAME OF THE BLESSED AND UNDIVIDED TRINITY. AMEN

By the Term of These Presents. WE.Ignatius Carolus.by the Graceof GOD. ARCHBISHOP & PRIMATE,of all Old Catholics in GREAT BRITAIN AND OVERSEAS, do make it known unto all men, that on MAY 14th, in the One Thousand,nine Hundred and Sixty Eighth year of our LORD'S INCARNATION, WE, IGNATIUS CAROLUS SOLEMNLY CONFERRING HOLY ORDERS,under the Protection of ALMIGHTY GOD, did admit OUR Beloved;

ANDRE' BARBEAU.

(of whose pious life,conversation and competent knowledge we were well assured) into the MOST SACRED ORDER OF

THE EPISCOPATE.

ACCORDING TO THE MANNER & FORM PRESCRIBED AND USED BY THE ROMAN PONTIFICAL. AND HIM, THE SAID:

ANDRE' BARBEAU

DID THEN AND THERE ARCHIEPISCOPALLY & CANONICALLY CONSCRATE BISHOP OF OUR DIOCESE AND PROVINCE OF QUEBEC IN CANADA.

WITH FULL JURISDICTION OVER ALL QUEBEC IN ALL MATTERS ECCLESIASTICAL AND SPIRITUAL, HE HAVING FIRST,IN OUR PRESENCE,MADE AND SUBSCRIBED SUCH OATHS AS ARE IN SUCH CASES REQUIRED.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF WE HAVE APPENDED OUR SIGNATURE, AND CAUSED THE SEAL OF THE CHURCH TO BE HEREUNTO AFFIXED,THE DAY AND YEAR ABOVE MENTIONED AND IN THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF OUR EPISCOPATE

Signed ✝ Ignatius Carolus

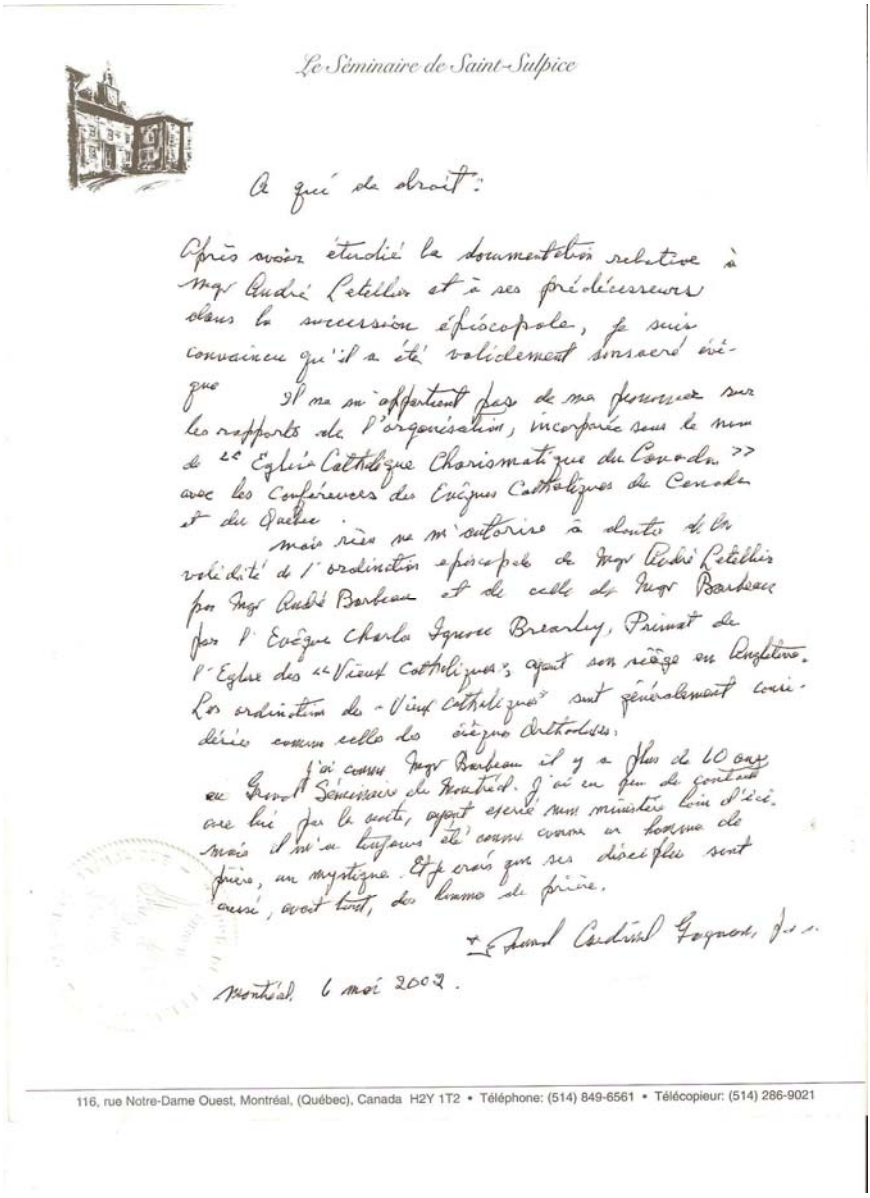
ARCHBISHOP & PRIMATE

Barbeau's consecration certificate

The Catholic Charismatic Church has been more successful than many Independent jurisdictions, outlasting the death of its founder and even expanding into the United States and as far as Italy. In 2002, Barbeau's successor as patriarch , Andre Letellier, sent a copy of Barbeau's documentation to Eduoard Cardinal Gagnon (1918-2007), asking for an assessment of whether his episcopal consecration is valid. Having retired a year earlier, Gagnon had nothing to lose by giving his honest opinion:

> *To whom it may concern: After having studied the documentation about Mgr André Letellier and his predecessors in episcopal succession, I am convinced that he has been validly consecrated a bishop. It is not my intention to rule on the reports of the organization, incorporated under the name of Catholic Charismatic Church of Canada with the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Canada and of Québec. But nothing allows me to doubt the validity of episcopal ordination of Mgr André Letellier by Archbishop André Barbeau and that of Archbishop Barbeau by Archbishop Ignatius Charles Brearley, Primate of the Church of the "Old Catholics" having its seat in England. The ordinations of the "Old Catholics" are generally considered to be the same as those of Orthodox bishops. I have known Archbishop Barbeau for more than 60 years since our time at the Grand Seminary of Montreal. I have had little contact with him thereafter, having exercised my ministry far from here. But he has always been known to me as a man of prayer, a mystic. And I think that his disciples are also, above all, men of prayer.*
> *+ Edouard Cardinal Gagnon,*
> *p.s.s. Montreal, 6 May 2002*

An image also exists of the handwritten letter in the original French. I include it here for the sake of completeness:



Le Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice

À qui de droit :

Après avoir étudié la documentation relative à Mgr André Létellier et à ses prédécesseurs dans la succession épiscopale, je suis convaincu qu'il a été validement consacré évêque.

Il ne m'appartient pas de me prononcer sur les rapports de l'organisation, incorporée sous le nom de « Église Catholique Charismatique du Canada » avec les Conférences des Évêques Catholiques du Canada et du Québec.

Mais rien ne m'autorise à douter de la validité de l'ordination épiscopale de Mgr André Létellier par Mgr André Barbeau et de celle de Mgr Barbeau par l'Évêque Charles Ignace Brearley, Primat de l'Église des « Vieux Catholiques » ayant son siège en Angleterre. Les ordinations de « Vieux Catholiques » sont généralement considérées comme celles des évêques orthodoxes.

J'ai connu Mgr Barbeau il y a plus de 40 ans au Grand Séminaire de Montréal. J'ai eu peu de contacts avec lui par la suite, ayant exercé mon ministère loin d'ici. Mais il m'a toujours été connu comme un homme de prière, un mystique. Et je crois que ses disciples sont aussi, avant tout, des hommes de prière.

+ Edward Cardinal Gagnon, p.s.s.

Montréal, 6 mai 2002.

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Cardinal Emeritus Gagnon's letter on the validity of Barbeau's episcopacy

However, as often happens in the Independent Movement, Bishop Barbeau received *sub conditione* consecration several other times, up to and including the "mutual exchange of lineages" with Bellemare in 1976. The result is that the "Vilatte-Bricaud" occultist lineage is now found in the Thucite side of the smaller groups of the movement, as

well as all those Traditional bishops who derive consecrations from Barbeau and his successors. I will not give names because many are still living, and they are easy enough to find via surfing the internet. However, the number of Traditional Bishops deriving their lineage from "Caro-Bellemare-Barbeau" outnumber those who derive their lineage from "Caro-Mamistra Olivares-Lopez-Gaston."

Patrick Taylor

One Traditional Catholic bishop who possesses both the "Caro-Barbeau" and "Caro-Lopez Gaston" lineages is the late Patrick Craig Taylor (1948-2018), whom we mentioned briefly above. As he, without his knowledge, was a major source for these lineages proliferating throughout the Traditional Movement (though far from the only one!), it is worth speaking about him.

Bishop Taylor was born and raised Roman Catholic, and once told me "An Orthodox bishop took me in." This "Orthodox bishop" was Charles David Luther (d. 2000) of the *Western Orthodox Church in America and Servants of the Good Shepherd*, who ordained Taylor to the priesthood on January 14, 1989. Taylor was then originally consecrated to the episcopate on November 20, 1993 by Joseph Paul A. "Michael" Boucher, bishop of the *Catholic Charismatic Church of Canada* (who in turn was consecrated by Andre Barbeau on April 9, 1989), with co-consecrators Denis Michael Garrison and Paul Vincent Dolan, both belonging to the *American Orthodox Church*.

Upon his consecration, Bishop Taylor started the *Society of the Virgin Mary* (known by its initials "SVM"), headquartered at his home in Beckley, West Virgina, which he styled "St. Basil's Roman Catholic Church." In 1999, he sent to Rome for a Papal blessing and received one congratulating him on "the occasion of the 6th anniversary of his Episcopate.

His Holiness John Paul II
cordially imparts
his Apostolic Blessing to
Most Reverend Patrick C. Taylor
on the occasion of
the 6th Anniversary of his Episcopate
November 20, 1993 - 1999

Bishop Taylor's papal blessing, received 1999

Taylor received the Thuc-Datessen-Olivares Mamistra lineage on November 27, 2001, when he received *sub conditione* consecration at the hands of Bishop Merill W.B. Adamson in a "mutual exchange of lineages" with Adamson and at least one other bishop. Though Taylor has been quoted as saying "I feel like an idiot" for having done this, a copy of this subconditional consecration certificate (in Latin) could be found hanging on the wall in his church. Bishop Taylor went on to consecrate numerous bishops – at least six that I know of for certain – who went on to serve in the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement.

Bishop Taylor has received a lot of attention from within the Traditional Movement, notably from the late Fr. Rama Coomarswamy (whom we mentioned above). In his article *I'm the Only One Ordained*, Coomaraswamy describes Taylor as being the "most significant individual" in the "Costa-Ferraz" lineage (one of the lineages he received from Boucher), which the article identifies as "the so-called Brazilian line which was at one time schismatic, but which reconciled to Rome." This statement is only half true and may need its own section to explain fully, but the gist is that Bishop

Carlos Duarte Costa (1888-1961) was excommunicated by Rome in 1945 and founded the "Catholic Apostolic Church of Brazil" (*Igreja Catholica Apostolica Brasileira*), for which he consecrated bishops. One of those bishops, Salomao Ferraz, eventually reconciled to Rome in 1958 and was accepted as a bishop, but before that date he had consecrated others for the Brazilian Church. Taylor's "Costa-Ferraz" lineage descends from these others.

Coomaraswamy also claims that he asked his best friend (former Jesuit Malachi Martin) to make inquiries from his contacts in Rome about the validity of Bishop Taylor's consecration. He then claims that "I have in my possession and hand written letter from Malachi Martin affirming the validity of Bishop Patrick Taylor." This claim has given rise to something of an urban legend in the circle of "Taylor-Line" bishops, that Bishop Taylor himself possessed a copy of this letter and kept it in a safe.

Having met him, I consider him both a man of good character and a devout Catholic. He was a Sedeplenist, who would defend the Papacy by saying "Even if he's a bad father, he's still our father." He was not an occultist and I believe he had no knowledge of the content of the lineages he received. In fact the closest thing to "scandal" the Society of the Virgin Mary ever had was around 2005, when Taylor decided to accept a married priest to join the Society's ranks (though a handful of married priests exist within the Traditional Movement, most Trads consider clerical celibacy as one of their "sacred cows," far more so than even the most "conservative" Novus Ordinarians!).

To the best of my knowledge, no copy of the alleged "handwritten letter from Malachi Martin" has ever come to light, whether from Taylor's papers of from Coomaraswamy's.

I myself have a personal stake in this story, as I am one of those several Traditionalist bishops receiving consecration from Bishop Taylor on March 21, 2007, at St. Basil's Roman Catholic Church in Beckley, West Virginia. This means the story of his apostolic succession is likewise the story of my own, warts and all.

Bishop ✠Patrick C. Taylor, S.V.M.
Society of the Virgin Mary

Pro Multis

UBI CARITAS IBI DEUS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Peace and Apostolic Benediction to All the Faithful in Christ.

Be it known, that I, Bishop Patrick Taylor, by the grace of God a Roman Catholic Bishop in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic church founded by our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ, it also being the thirteenth year of my episcopacy, and in keeping with Sacred Canons and Constitutions, do on this date, while using the pre-Vatican Council II traditional ordination rite, Consecrate, sub-conditione, our beloved son in Christ,

Jason Spadafore

to the Order of the Episcopacy in the Roman Catholic Church this the 21th day of March in the year of our Lord, 2007, at Beckley, West Virginia.

✠Patrick C. Taylor, SVM

SOCIETY OF THE VIRGIN MARY
CORPORATE SEAL

MOST REV. PATRICK TAYLOR, D.D.
EPISCOPAL
SEAL
UBI CARITAS IBI DEUS

My consecration certificate from Bishop Taylor

Four: Another Possible Occult Lineage

Having discussed the Vilatte-Bricaud lineage and two points of entry into the Traditional Catholic Movement, I would like to discuss another possible "occultist-friendly" lineage found in the movement as well, this one coming from the Matthew succession. To call this an "occultist" lineage would be reaching, yet I include it in this discussion because omitting it would seem to make our overview incomplete.

I call this the "Matthew-Willoughby-Banks" lineage, and will start with the source, then trace its progression into the Traditional Movement just as we have with the Vilatte-Bricaud-Mamistra succession.

Since this line is alleged, and I have not seen the final consecration certificate in this lineage, I will simply give a brief overview in the form of a traditional succession table, while providing some biographical commentary when I have it to offer. The names of each new entry on the table are **bold** and underscored for the sake of clarity.

GERARDUS GUL (1847-1920), Archbishop of the Old Catholic Church of Utrecht, on April 28, 1908, consecrated:

ARNOLD HARRIS MATTHEW (1852-1919), a former Roman Catholic priest known for vacillating between Catholicism and Anglicanism. Matthew sought and obtained consecration from Gul after receiving false information from Father Richard O'Halloran that there were a large number of disaffected Catholics and Anglicans in England who would welcome an Old Catholic Church in their country. O'Halloran also gave the same information to the Old Catholic Union, who in turn elected Matthew to be consecrated in 1908. In 1910 Matthew, citing differences between traditional Catholic praxis and that of the Continental Old Catholics, declared his autonomy from Utrecht and formed the Old Roman Catholic Church. Matthew consecrated many men to the episcopate and was initially sympathetic to the Theosophic Society; the lineage of the Theosophic Society's bishops comes from him.

On October 28, 1914, Bishop Matthew consecrated:

FREDERICK SAMUEL WILLOUGHBY (1862-1928), a former Anglican priest who, when given the choice of resignation or facing an inquiry, resigned from the Church of England on July 3, 1914, in response to allegations of homosexuality and embezzlement of funds. He and Matthew worked together for the Old Roman Catholic Church in Great Britain for less than a year, until in May 1915, when the allegations against him became public; Matthew called a synod on the matter, resulting in Willoughby's expulsion.

Willoughby went on to consecrate a number of bishops, and is best known for consecrating a number of theosophists who would later form the *Liberal Catholic Church*. Though he did not join this church, he considered himself the "father of their episcopate."

Toward the end of his life (year unknown, but likely prior to 1920), Willoughby was received into the Roman Catholic Church as a lay. However, on July 9, 1922, Bishop Willoughby consecrated:

JAMES BARTHOLOMEW BANKS (1894-1975), a Englishman from the "Landed Gentry," who after his consecration founded the Service Church of the Great Sacrifice with especial intention for veterans of World War I. Though neither a Theosophist nor a member of the Liberal Catholic Church, Banks was a believer in reincarnation, universalism, and the equal masculinity-femininity of God, and in spiritual evolution; his church's hymnal likewise incorporated hymns from the Liberal Catholic bishops.

On June 22, 1924, Bishop Banks consecrated:

JAMES MATTHEW COOPER, of whom I have not been able to find biographical information. According to John Kersey's *Arnold Harris Matthew and the Old Catholic Movement in England*, Banks and Cooper had a falling out after the latter's consecration, and Banks later disavowed all knowledge of Cooper (p. 241-242).

On January 31, 1954, Bishop Cooper consecrated:

CHARLES BREARLEY (1894-1978), the Patriarch of the Old Holy Catholic Church, who took the name "Ignatius Carolus." We should note that Brearley again received *sub conditione* consecration that year in an "exchange of lineages" with Philip Stuart Singer (1910-1971), on November 14th, and that Singer had received consecration from George Hugh de Wilmott Newman (1905-1979), who had received several such *sub conditione* consecrations by that point with the intention of collecting every lineage then available among Independent bishops. Thus Brearley could be said to have possessed all these lineages as well, which he passed on to those he consecrated.

We already discussed that on May 14, 1968, Bishop Brearley consecrated **Andre Barbeau**, and everything discussed here also applies to the Barbeau lineage as well as the remainder of the line currently under consideration.

Bishop Brearley, on June 20, 1957, consecrated:

ROGER REGNIER, of whom I have been able to find no biographical information. The only information I have found is that he was consecrated for the *Sainte Église Apostolique*, the affiliate of The Old Holy Catholic Church in France, and that he led an esoteric ministry with emphasis on faith-healing. The content of that ministry, I have been unable to find.

On August 7, 1965, Bishop Regnier consecrated:

DONALD PETER DAY, who was ordained to the priesthood in December of 1961 by William H. F. Brothers, bishop of the Old Catholic Church in America. On May 28, 1967, Day was consecrated *sub conditione* by Hugh George de Wilmott Newman. Day was associated with the *Old Catholic Orthodox Church* and the *Universal Church of the New Alliance*.

On October 1, 1967, Bishop Day consecrated:

ROGER CHARLES AUGUSTINE GLEAVES (b.1935), who was associated with the *Old Catholic Church* in Britain, and later with the British affiliate of the *Catholic Apostolic Church of Brazil*. Gleaves is a convicted pedophile who served time in prison twice for this

offense (in the 1970s and again in 1998), and also imprisoned in 1982 on charges relating to fraud. A timeline of his activities (with comments from his victims) can be found at: https://scepticpeg.wordpress.com/2016/11/20/the-soho-connections-roger-gleaves/

On an unspecified date in 1990, Bishop Gleaves is ***alleged*** to have consecrated:

JOHN CHRISTOPHER SIMMONS (1945-2003), primate of the Independent Catholic Church in Great Britain. No documentation for this ***alleged*** consecration is known, only that Simmons and Gleaves worked together during the 1990s (until Gleaves' imprisonment in 1998), and in the Independent movement it is fairly common for consecrations to happen among individuals who work together. Simmons is documented to have been consecrated by Harold Norwood on September 4, 1993, and Norwood's was consecrated by Louis Castillo-Mendez in 1990, who in turn was consecrated by Carlos Duarte Costa in 1948.

The question of whether Simmons was originally consecrated by Gleaves is important and needs answering, because Simmons went on to consecrate two bishops who serve within the Traditional Roman Catholic movement (one still living, one deceased).

Five: Observations and Conclusions

We have come thus far and examined two conduits by which occultist lines of apostolic succession have penetrated the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement, alongside a possible third. Everything I have written is common knowledge in some circles, even though it remains unknown by the bulk of Traditional Catholics. It may well be the first time you come across this information.

Having considered this, what are we to do?

Are These Bishops Valid?

The first question a faithful Catholic may ask is: *Are these bishops valid? What about the priests they ordain? Have I been going to invalid or sacrilegious Masses?*

The short answer to that question is *Yes. They are all perfectly valid.*

Traditional Catholic theology holds that so long as proper form, matter, and intent are used in the ceremony, the sacrament is valid. Traditional Catholic theology also holds that the celebrant's personal sinfulness or disbelief have no bearing on whether it is valid. These are considered under the heading of *probity* (i.e. a minister's worthiness), and have nothing to do with whether a sacrament was valid.

According to every certificate I have seen regarding these lineages, the Roman Pontifical was used for all these consecrations. This tells us that valid form and matter were used. If they took enough care to restrict their ritual to the Roman Pontifical and make that known on this certificates, then they likely had at minimum a *virtual intention* of doing what the Church does, which gives us a certainty these ordinations and consecrations are valid.

This means, O faithful Traditional Catholic, that your priest is a real priest, and you have *not* been going to an invalid or sacrilegious Mass.

Now if you want to raise contentions about *liceity*, then that is another matter because (technically speaking) nobody is licit, not even the

Eastern Orthodox or the Society of St. Pius X. But liceity only pertains to the Novus Ordo Church's opinion of you, and why would any Traditional Catholic care what *they* think?

I Feel "Dirty!"

If you feel dirty, it makes sense as an emotional reaction because we just finished talking about how your bishop might be descended from a Freemason, Occultist, Homosexual, or Pedophile. The Traditional Movement has a culture of scrupulosity built around avoiding "occasion for scandal" (a phrase I came to hate while serving in the Movement!), and all these things fit neatly into the Movement's definition for "scandal."

The main thing to recognize here is that *the son is not responsible for the sins of the father*, meaning in this case that if someone was consecrated by a pedophile-bishop, they do not take part for their consecrator's sins.

In fact – especially in the case of pedophile clergy – they tend to be smooth operators, very charming and able to convince people of anything, including that the allegations against them were "calumny" or "persecution," or that "the judge was being political and wanted to make an example." It is possible for a bishop-elect, or a priest-to-be-ordained, to believe such a lie and trust the bishop who ordained or consecrated them.

Let's take this to its logical conclusion: if the ordinand were responsible for the sins of the ordinator, then would the post-Vatican II Church have any moral right for *anything*?

Even if he received ordination from a "bad" source, your priest is most likely a good and pious man, orthodox in faith and doing the best he can to guide and provide sacraments for his flock. There is no reason for you to feel "dirty" for receiving the sacraments from his hands, and even less reason to let anyone tell you otherwise (looking at you, SSPXers and Novus Ordinarians!).

So, Why Does This Matter?

You may also be wondering that if these lines exist, and if I have no reason to care, then why does any of this mater?

The best answer I can give is that *it doesn't matter at all*!

I wrote this to inform that these lines exist, and the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement is not as "pure" as it likes to pretend to be, especially with all the Feeneyism and Purity-spiraling that takes place there. Yet purity is the goal of humanity, not its starting condition.

If anything, what matters is that these lines *have been returned* to the Catholic Church by way of finding themselves in the Traditional Movement, returned to the hands of true Catholics who will use them for the right reasons and (hopefully) only transmit them to good and worthy men for the same reasons.

So in essence, this is a cause not for despair, but for *celebration*!

Let us celebrate the lineages that have returned home and been repatriated in their native soil, rather than look for stones to throw at one another for any number of imaginary reasons. Sadly this is not the way of Traditionalist culture (as any "Trad" reading this knows all too well!), so we can expect the slings and arrows to continue.

The best thing you can do is ignore them. If they're not paying your bills – and they're certainly not responsible for your salvation – then they've nothing to say by insulting you.

Appendix: The Vilatte-Bricaud-Mamistra Lineage

I here present a quick succession table of the Vilatte-Bricaud lineage, for the convenience of readers desiring a "quick reference chart."

Vilatte Line to Mamistra Olivares

Here we present a concise lineage from Vilatte to Mamistra Olivares, to Lopez-Gaston. We begin with Vilatte's consecrator:

Antonio Francisco Xavier Alvares (Mar Julius I), of the Malankara Syrian Church, Metropolitan of Goa, Ceylon, and Greater India. On May 29, 1892, Metropolitan Xavier Alvares consecrated:

Joseph René Vilatte, who on May 6, 1900, consecrated:

Paolo Miraglia-Gulotti, who on December 4, 1904, consecrated:

Jules Houssaye, who on June 21, 1911, consecrated:

Louis-Marie-François Giraud, who on July 21, 1913, consecrated:

Jean Bricaud (Tau Jean or Tau Joannes), who on May 5, 19189, consecrated:

Victor Blanchard (Tau Targelius), who on January 7, 1945, consecrated:

Roger Ménard (Tau Eon), who on June 10, 1946, consecrated:

Robert Ambelain (Tau Jean II), who on May 31, 1959, consecrated:

Roger Deschamps (Tau Jean Rudiger), who on June 1, 1963, consecrated:

Armand Raymond Toussaint (Tau Raymond Panagion), who on June 10, 1972, consecrated:

Roger Caro (Pierre Phoebus), who on June 23, 1984, consecrated:

Guy Jean Mamistra Olivares (Tau Joannes). Mamistra Olivares was later re-consecrated *sub conditione* by Pierre Salle of the Ngo Dinh Thuc lineage on March 29, 1987. On June 29, 1992, Bishop Mamistra Olivares consecrated:

José-Ramon Lopez-Gaston, who went on to consecrate numerous Traditional Roman Catholic bishops.

Thuc Lineage Leading to Mamistra Olivares

Here we give a concise table of the lineage leading from Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc to Lopez-Gaston, which is the lineage more commonly seen on succession tables.

Ngo Dinh Thuc Pierre-Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bulla Regia and Hue, Vietnam, who on September 25, 1982, consecrated *sub conditione*:

Christian Marie Datessen, an Old Catholic bishop who had originally been consecrated by Andre Enos on September 10, 1981. Dateseen is said to have embraced Traditional Catholicism and professed a solid Traditional Catholic faith. On June 27, 1983, Bishop Datessen consecrated:

Pierre Salle, who on March 28, 1987, consecrated *sub conditione*:

Guy Jean Mamistra Olivares (Tau Joannes), who on June 29, 1992, consecrated:

José-Ramon Lopez-Gaston, who went on to consecrate numerous Traditional Roman Catholic bishops.

Another (Disputed) Thuc Lineage Leading to Lopez-Gaston

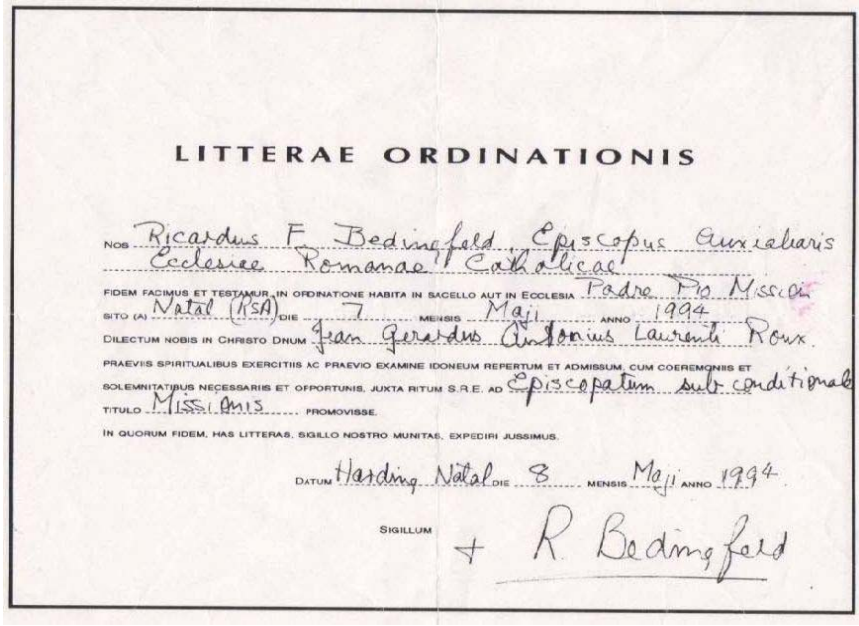
It is possible Lopez-Gaston may have realized the "occult content" of the succession lineage he received from Mamistra Olivares, because a year after his consecration, we see him accepting *sub conditione* from another bishop claiming to be in the Thuc lineage. This line is disputed, but for the sake of completeness we give the lineage here.

Ngo Dinh Thuc Pierre-Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bulla Regia and Hue, Vietnam, who on April 18, 1982, allegedly consecrated *sub conditione*, in Loano, Italy:

Jean Gérard de la Passion Antoine Laurent Charles Roux (b. 1951), originally a bishop in the Old Catholic lineage of Julien Erni (whose line descends from Gerardus Gul by way of Jan Kowalski). The reality of this consecration is contested by the claim Archbishop Ngo was in Munich on that day. However, the eyewitness reports of a Ms. Louise Littieri and Fr. Luigi Boni claim that Archbishop Ngo was, in fact, in Italy and did consecrate Bishop Roux. Bishop Roux, on November 20, 1993 at Miami, Florida, consecrated *sub conditione*:

José-Ramon Lopez-Gaston, who went on to consecrate numerous Traditional Roman Catholic bishops.

NOTE: Roux was indeed consecrated *sub conditione* by a bishop in the "Thuc-Des Lauriers" lineage (Richard Paston-Bedingfeld) on May 7, 1994, yet this would be six months after he conferred *sub conditione* on Lopez-Gaston, making it a moot point for our purposes.



LITTERAE ORDINATIONIS

NOS Ricardus F. Bedingfeld Episcopus Auxiliaris Ecclesiae Romanae Catholicae

FIDEM FACIMUS ET TESTAMUR IN ORDINATIONE HABITA IN SACELLO AUT IN ECCLESIA Padre Pio Missae

SITO (A) Natal (RSA) DIE 7 MENSIS Maji ANNO 1994

DILECTUM NOBIS IN CHRISTO DNUM Jean Gerardus Antonius Laurent Roux

PRAEVIIS SPIRITUALIBUS EXERCITIIS AC PRAEVIO EXAMINE IDONEUM REPERTUM ET ADMISSUM, CUM COEREMONIIS ET SOLEMNITATIBUS NECESSARIIS ET OPPORTUNIS, JUXTA RITUM S.R.E. AD Episcopatum sub conditionale

TITULO Missionis PROMOVISSE.

IN QUORUM FIDEM, HAS LITTERAS, SIGILLO NOSTRO MUNITAS, EXPEDIRI JUSSIMUS.

DATUM Harding Natal DIE 8 MENSIS Maji ANNO 1994

SIGILLUM + R Bedingfeld

Roux's consecration certificate from Bedingfeld

Appendix II: The Vilatte-Bricaud-Barbeau Lineage

Here is a concise "quick reference" table for the Vilatte-Bricaud Lineage as possessed by the late André Barbeau, who also consecrated several Traditionalist bishops. We again begin with Vilatte's consecrator:

Antonio Francisco Xavier Alvares (Mar Julius I), of the Malankara Syrian Church, Metropolitan of Goa, Ceylon, and Greater India. On May 29, 1892, Metropolitan Xavier Alvares consecrated:

Joseph René Vilatte, who on May 6, 1900, consecrated:

Paolo Miraglia-Gulotti, who on December 4, 1904, consecrated:

Jules Houssaye, who on June 21, 1911, consecrated:

Louis-Marie-François Giraud, who on July 21, 1913, consecrated:

Jean Bricaud (Tau Jean or Tau Joannes), who on May 5, 19189, consecrated:

Victor Blanchard (Tau Targelius), who on January 7, 1945, consecrated:

Roger Ménard (Tau Eon), who on June 10, 1946, consecrated:

Robert Ambelain (Tau Jean II), who on May 31, 1959, consecrated:

Roger Deschamps (Tau Jean Rudiger), who on June 1, 1963, consecrated:

Armand Raymond Toussaint (Tau Raymond Panagion), who on June 10, 1972, consecrated:

Roger Caro (Pierre Phoebus), who on June 26, 1976, consecrated *sub conditione*:

Jacques de Aurata Pellis (George Bellemare), who on December 12, 1976 consecrated *sub conditione* in an exchange of lineages:

André Barbeau, patriarch of the Catholic Charismatic Church, who consecrated Traditional Roman Catholic bishops, and further Traditional bishops were consecrated by others whose succession is derived from him.

La Sainte Eglise Catholique

Charismatique

LA CITE DE MAR

AU NOM DE L'AUGUSTE, TRES SAINTE ET ADORABLE TRINITE.

Nous, ANDRE I BARBEAU, D.D., par la grâce de Dieu, Patriarche Catholique Charismatique des Apôtres des Derniers Temps du Canada, Archevêque Métropolitain du Grand Montréal, P.Q., Cardinal-Patriarche d'honneur de l'Eglise Templière de la Nouvelle Alliance, Primat annuel de l'UNION des Eglises Catholiques du Rite Traditionel,

EN VERTU DES POUVOIRS accordés par nos diverses SUCCESSIONS APOSTOLIQUES PATRIARCALES,

RE-CONSACRONS " sub conditione "

SON EXCELLENCE Mgr. GEORGES BELLEMARE, Archevêque du Québec, Primat de l'Eglise de la Nouvelle Alliance du Canada, selon le Nouveau Pontifical Romain de l'Eglise Catholique Romaine, en observant fidèlement les rubriques prescrites, ce douze décembre mil neuf cent soixante-seize, en la Cathédrale-Sanctuaire du Divin Coeur, Cité de Marie, Mirabel, P.Q. Canada.

EN FOI DE QUOI, nous apposons notre signature, notre Sceau et Seing, ce 12 décembre 1976.

André I Barbeau, D.D.
Patriarche-Archevêque Catholique
Charismatique du Canada

Document attesting Barbeau's exchange of lineages with Bellemare

Appendix III: The Future of Traditional Roman Catholicism

I recently posted on Facebook about my prognosis for the future of Traditional Roman Catholicism. It seems worth re-posting here.

In short, I do not see the Traditional Movement lasting much longer. If anything, I see it going the way of the Independent Sacramental Movement within the next 100 years.

I say this because in my study of the Independent Movement, I saw that the early ISM existed for reasons that addressed the lay faithful's concerns at the time, typically stemming from resistance to papal infallibility (on the Continent), or immigrant groups suffering discrimination from the Irish and German-dominated Roman Catholic hierarchy (in America). As a result, these churches grew in number because the lay faithful had a reason to go to them.

However, in the Anglosphere these reasons started to disappear after World War I, and disappeared completely in the aftermath of World War II. Part of this may have to do with the fact war has a way of rearranging people's priorities, part of it may be the fact the doctrine of Papal Infallibility caused less of a stir in 1945 than in 1870, and part of it may be the fact that the children of immigrants were now in their second and third generation, having adapted to American societal norms and were less discriminated against by the "official" Church's hierarchy. In fact of these earlier churches, only the Polish National Catholic Church still remains, and some of the Old Roman Catholic churches are still standing.

What happened? What happened was that the laity either saw their problems with the Institutional Church addressed and chose to go back, or they grew up seeing no problems at all. **THIS SHOULD BE A LESSON TO THE TRADITIONAL ROMAN CATHOLIC MOVEMENT.**

Now let us look back at the Traditional Movement, which began for much the same reasons: Traditionalists perceive Rome as committing innovations at Vatican II (namely religious liberty, false ecumenism,

and *subsistit in*), and giving into those innovations full-throttle by way of the New Mass, Sacraments, catechism, seminary curriculum, and so forth. I will not explore those perceptions here, merely point out that they exist, because *that* is what drove the laity into the Traditional Movement to begin with.

In essence – whether real or imagined – the laity perceived Rome as "taking the 'Catholic' out of Catholicism," and then sought out a place where they could believe and worship as Catholics always had. This was the Traditional Movement's purpose in addressing an issue the mainstream Church wasn't addressing, and in fact the mainstream Church had created.

Now let us look at what happened after July 7, 2007, with the publication of *Summorum Pontificum*. Most of the laity attending Traditionalist chapels were only going there for the Latin Mass, and once the Novus Ordo Pope told them they could have it without the rest of the craziness commonly associated with Traditionalism, they started going back in droves to the Novus Ordo Church!

Those laity who remain within the Traditional Movement are there either by birth, by indoctrination, or because they realize the fight is over more than just the Liturgy and require greater assurances from Rome before jumping ship for the Novus Ordinarians. This situation is likely to remain until the last Baby Boomer cardinal dies.

We have to understand a generation gap exists, which is why I mention the Baby Boomers here. This is because for Gen-Silent and for Baby Boomers, Vatican II is a firsthand experience for them and generally produced an immediate love/hate reaction. Those who "loved" it, we see the church architecture and intentionally-mistranslated liturgy they produced. Those who "hated" it, often either became home-aloners, left the Church entirely, or became the first members of the Traditional Movement.

Now consider Generation X. For Gen-X, Vatican II was no "movement of the Holy Spirit" or a "firsthand memory," but rather it was just 16 pieces of paper that caused no end of contention in the parishes of their childhood.

This means the Gen-Silent and Gen-Boomer Cardinals (and Popes) are on the "Love" side and will invest more energy into protecting their particular interpretation of their "baby." But once the last Baby Boomer cardinal dies and a Gen-Xer becomes Pope, all bets will be off and a full strategy of "Embrace-Extend-Extinguish" will be possible.

I predict that a Gen-X Pope will be more likely to make concessions to the Traditionalists that would have been unconscionable to Gen-Silent and Gen-Boomer. These concessions – such as a reading of the Council to preclude being dogmatic, in line with Pope John XXIII's opening address to the Council, that he intended to "proclaim no new doctrine" – are more likely to assuage Traditionalist concerns, and more Trad laity will end up returning to the Novus Ordo Church. We are also likely to find larger groups (especially the Society of St. Pius X) reconciling with Rome once these concessions reach critical mass, or Traditional clergy and laity start tiring of the struggle.

Within 100 years, the Trad Movement will likely have suffered the same fate as the Independent Movement, with only the die-hards and those with an axe to grind against Rome remaining. We can already see some ISM-like behavior in the smaller groups, and at least one of the larger groups is training their seminarians for shorter periods than they used to. This spells the beginning of decline.

Can the Traditional Movement prevent it at this point? Yes.

Will the Traditional Movement prevent it at this point? No. Because that would require the different groups to start recognizing and working with each other, something most Trads resolutely refuse to do.

So, what do I see in 100 years? If Christianity survives at all in the Western world, I see the Traditional Movement becoming a mere shadow of what it once was. The larger groups may still be around, though in smaller numbers, though the more fanatical groups may be somewhat larger. Many groups will become "ordination mills" just like what we see in many ISM jurisdictions, and it's even possible the Lefebvre lineage might become one of many lines swapped in *sub conditione* "cross-consecration" ceremonies.

There will be fewer laity, and the Movement in general may appear as some kind of "ultra-conservative" branch of the ISM, by whatever standard "conservatism" may be defined 100 years from now. How that compares to the conservatism of our day is anybody's guess, as societal standards are always changing (along with what society deems "worth conserving").

I see a bleak future ahead, both for Western Christianity in general and Traditional Catholicism in particular. The impending demise of Traditional Catholicism is something Novus Ordinarians may take with a dose of *schadenfreude*, but it is one that I greet with tears.

I may have walked away from the Movement, but I have not walked away from the Faith. Likewise I believe that in spite of the Traditional Movement's problems, it remains the only place on this planet where authentic Roman Catholicism can be found. So I ask each and every believing True Catholic:

What are you doing do make sure the Movement lasts after tomorrow?

What are you doing to make sure the Movement carries on after you die?

What are you doing to make sure the Movement is worth saving?

OCCASION FOR SCANDAL?

For decades the Traditional Roman Catholic Movement has fought to defend authentic Catholicism, and has seen its share of victories and defeats.

But many may not know: the “movement” is actually a fragmented mass of individuals and groups, many of whom dislike each other more intensely than they ever hated Vatican II. And many of these bishops possess “apostolic succession” lineages coming from Occultists, Gnostics, Freemasons, and Martinists, some of the very things Traditional Catholics have sworn as mortal enemies.

In this text, Agostino lays out these lineages, their sources, the personalities behind them and the “points of contact” where they spread within the Traditional Movement, generally unknown to the bishops themselves.

Is this “occasion for scandal?”
Or is this “occasion for rejoicing?”

YOU DECIDE!